

## Cairo to host conference on Jerusalem

CAIRO (AFP) — The Arab League and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference will hold a conference here on March 12 to discuss Israeli settlements in Jerusalem, a league official said Tuesday. Egypt's Foreign Minister Amr Musa, a representative of Morocco's King Hassan II and around 20 Palestinians will attend the three-day meeting, the league's deputy secretary general, Said Kamal, told AFP. Egypt's highest Sunni Muslim authority, Sheikh Gad Al Haq Ali Gad Al Haq, and Christian Coptic Pope Shenouda III will also attend, he added. The conference, to be held under the slogan "Jerusalem, A City of Peace" will discuss "ways to counter Israeli colonization plans in the holy city and to support its population," Mr. Kamal said. Israel has built ten Jewish neighborhoods in Arab East Jerusalem since occupying it in 1967, boosting the number of Jewish residents there to 165,000, compared to 155,000 Arabs. Talks between Israel and the Palestinians on Jerusalem's future are due to start in May 1995 as part of negotiations on the final status of the occupied territories.

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## British team arrives in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Two British trade delegates have arrived in Baghdad to prepare a visit by representatives of 27 British companies, the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Tuesday. Edmund Sykes of the Iraqi British Interests Group (IBI) and an executive from the trading company United Projects, which had previous links with Iraq, arrived here Monday, the agency said. The businessmen will be followed Friday by delegates from 27 industrial, food and pharmaceutical firms.

## Kill yourself, Libya tells Arafat

TRIPOLI (AFP) — Libya on Tuesday called on Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to commit suicide because he had allowed Israel to "fool" him. "It is clear that the Israeli enemy has fooled Abu Ammar by getting him to recognise the Jewish state to the detriment of the Arab Nation," the Libyan official agency JANA said. "It would be more honourable for Arafat to commit suicide after writing a last will and testament telling his people to continue the struggle against the Israeli enemy."

## Beirut demands death for suspects

BEIRUT (R) — A prosecutor demanded the death penalty on Tuesday for four people accused of a December car-bombing that killed three people in Beirut including the brother of Lebanon's most wanted kidnapper. Military investigating Judge Riad Tle'i said the main suspect, Ahmad Al Hallaq, was an agent for Israel's Mossad intelligence with orders to kill Fuad Moughniyyeh, the brother of Imad Moughniyyeh, Lebanon's most wanted hostage-taker. Mr. Tle'i issued an indictment demanding the death penalty for Mr. Hallaq and another Lebanese, Tawfiq Naser. Both men remain at large and Mr. Tle'i said Mr. Hallaq had fled to Israel or its occupation zone in South Lebanon.

## Druze strike

MAJDAL SHAMS (AFP) — The 15,000 Druze living on the Golan plateau staged their annual strike Tuesday against Israel's de facto annexation of the Heights in 1981. Israel deployed some 500 police to cope with expected demonstrations, particularly in Majdal Shams where the main Druze town where schools and shops were shut. The protest takes place every Feb. 14 marking the start of a strike against Israel's decision in December 1981 to extend Israeli legislation over the strategic territory.

## China opposes Libya sanctions

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen said Tuesday that China was opposed to sanctions against Libya over the Lockerbie plane bombing. Xinhua news agency reported. In a meeting with visiting Libyan Secretary of Foreign Affairs Omar Mustafa Al Munasser, Mr. Qian said China favoured settling international disputes peacefully. "China is not in favour of imposing sanctions against Libya, let alone increasing existing sanctions," Mr. Qian was quoted as saying by the official news agency.

## Jospin, Balladur equal in polls

PARIS (R) — A shock opinion poll released on Tuesday suggested Socialist candidate Lionel Jospin has caught up with or even overtaken conservative Prime Minister Edouard Balladur in the first round of France's presidential election. The poll by the IFOP institute for the magazine L'Express was the first to show Mr. Jospin leading the April 23 first ballot in one theoretical situation, although it found Mr. Balladur would beat him in the May 7 run-off between the two top candidates.

## Israelis kill Palestinian boy as Hebron marks massacre

HEBRON, Occupied West Bank (Agencies) — The first anniversary of the Hebron mosque massacre was marked Tuesday as soldiers shot dead a Palestinian teenager and wounded at least six others on the West Bank.

Troops opened fire on stone-throwers in Al Fawwar refugee camp on the edge of Hebron, killing 16-year-old Sami Mohammad Al Najjar and injuring five other protesters.

He was the 51st Palestinian cut down by Israeli bullets since autonomy began last May.

In Tulkarim, soldiers shot a youth lobbing rocks at an Israeli bus, military officials said.

Two Palestinians were hit with bullets in Hebron during demonstrations overnight when hundreds hurled stones at troops.

Youths were back on the streets Tuesday setting tyres ablaze as a general strike paralysed Hebron, Tulkarim, Ramallah and Nablus were also partly closed.

Hundreds of Muslims filed into the Ibrahim Mosque for a service in memory of the more than 30 Palestinians slaughtered there by Jewish settlers Baruch Goldstein last February 25. Under the Muslim calendar the anniversary falls Tuesday-Wednesday.

Majdi Al Kariki, 16, returned to pray in the fortress-like complex where he was wounded in the thigh by Goldstein.

"I am against peace be-

cause it has failed," he said. "When we walk in the streets we are afraid of the settlers, when we go to the mosque we are threatened. It's only peace on paper."

Some 400 armed settlers live in the heart of Hebron, protected by 1,500 soldiers and surrounded by 120,000 Palestinians. Another 5,000 Jews populate Kiryat Arba, just outside the city, and the home of Goldstein.

"Things have only got worse since the massacre," said Palestinian Communications Minister Abdul Hafiz Al Ashab. "The victims have been punished."

"The credibility of the peace process diminishes every day. A majority of Palestinians no longer believe in it."

Sheikh Tayssir Rajab Al Tamimi, a fundamentalist preacher, said: "It's impossible to go on living with the settlers. It will lead to more massacres."

"The only answer is to get the settlers out of here."

"Goldstein is gone, but Goldstein is still alive, not only among the settlers and the army but also in some segments of Israeli society," said Khaled Amayra, a writer who supports Hamas.

"Everything is ripe for another massacre because nothing has changed," he warned.

The army was on red alert across the West Bank and tight security was also imposed in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, following intelligence reports that militants were

preparing revenge attacks. The government has kept the territories sealed off for a fourth week after 21 Israelis died in a suicide bombing on Jan. 22.

Israel moved over the weekend to curtail the activities of Jewish extremists who hailed Goldstein as a "holy man" and have organised a memorial Thursday in Kiryat Arba.

Security forces caught a member of the outlawed anti-Arab Kach movement with two home-made bombs. They accused 22-year-old settler Doron Golding, from Kiryat Arba, of plotting to kill Arabs.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said of the slaughter: "It was one of the most shameful things ever to happen in the history of the Jewish people. We have paid for this criminal act with numerous lives."

Government spokesman Uri Dromi issued a statement to condemn the massacre. "The vast majority of Israelis share this feeling," he said.

The army said Israel has paid \$1.6 million in compensation to the families of 29 Palestinians killed and 66 of the 125 wounded.

In Washington, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said on Monday a weekend meeting of Middle Eastern foreign ministers in Washington had improved the climate for an Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) summit later this week.

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## Sawt Al Shaab gets new board

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abu Ragheb on Tuesday decided to dissolve the board of directors of Sawt Al Shaab Company, which used to publish the Arabic-language Sawt Al Shaab daily and to form a new board with a one-year mandate with immediate effect.

The new board, which is chaired by Wasaf Azar, includes Munther Al Masri as deputy chairman, and as members Mohammad Bani Hani (representative of the Ministry of Industry and Trade), Youssef Al Rawabdeh (the Jordan Investment Corporation), Ali Kuleib (the Ministry of Finance) and Na'im Khouri (The Jordanian Auditors Society).

The decision to dissolve the board of directors of the company was based on article 196 of the Companies Law and in accordance with a recommendation by the companies controller after the company made huge losses, and was found to be unable to perform its duties properly and after the board decided to suspend the publication of Sawt Al Shaab, which had a circulation of less than 20,000 a day.

Companies Comptroller Sa'ed Hiyasat said the company, established in 1975, was for a long time suffering from financial difficulties and its accumulated losses represented nearly 180 per cent of its JD 2 million registered capital.

Mr. Hiyasat said the government had been studying the conditions of the company for several years and had given it several chances to improve its conditions. The government contributed to the company's capital in the beginning of the 1980s in a bid to help it overcome its problems, he said.

He said the dissolved board of directors of the company had proposed restructuring the company's capital but that the company's general assembly rejected the

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## Egypt turns nuclear-free zone proposal into treaty

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt and the Arab League secretariat, piling pressure on Israel to disclose its nuclear secrets, have drafted a treaty that would make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

The treaty, submitted to representatives of Arab states at a meeting in Cairo on Tuesday, is designed to include Israel and Iran, alongside all 22 members of the Arab League.

Under the present text, it would come into force only when eight core states sign and ratify it. These are Jordan, Israel, Iran, Algeria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak proposed such a zone in 1990 but Egypt has not previously formalised it in a treaty.

The idea has again come to prominence as Egypt, Israel and the United States manoeuvre over extending the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which runs out this year.

The draft treaty comes close to being a regional alternative to the NPT, adding chemical and biological weapons.

An Arab League assistant secretary general, Adnan Omran, linked the treaty directly with Israel's refusal to sign the NPT and open its nuclear programme to international inspection.

"Our independence and sovereignty will be meaningless if the Israeli nuclear umbrella continues, threatening every state in the Arab World," he told the meeting.

Israel is widely believed to have about 200 nuclear warheads but it will neither confirm nor deny this.

Mr. Omran attacked the five declared nuclear states, saying their request for an indefinite extension of the NPT was illogical and unacceptable.

"The great powers of today might divide and decline with the years and end up in the same state as Genghis Khan's empire. A nuclear treaty should not legitimise reality without taking into account... future developments," he said.

The row over the nuclear treaty has driven a serious wedge between Egypt and Israel. U.S. attempts to mediate a compromise do not appear to have borne fruit.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said on Monday that he and Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa clashed on the subject at a meeting of foreign ministers in Washington.

"There was a sharp exchange and a harsh exchange but there is no change in Israel's stance," Mr. Peres told Israel Radio in a Washington interview. "We only said that Egypt has no threat of destruction, Israel does — Iran and Iraq."

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, in an interview published on Sunday, went one step further in opposition to Israel's privileged nuclear position.

"There must be a balance between us and Israel. If they say they are going to sign in three or four years, we will hold back three or four years and sign with them," he said.

Against this background it is most unlikely that the Egyptian-drafted treaty will come into force in the near future.

But diplomats said Egypt saw it as a way to mobilise Arab support in opposition to the nuclear status quo. The treaty would set up an organisation to ensure that none of the signatories develop, produce, test, use, store, possess or deploy nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, and destroy any they have now.

Eight Arab states — Egypt, Syria and the six Gulf states — asked Israel to sign the NPT earlier this month and said tolerance of Israel's nuclear programme was incompatible with Middle East peace.

But diplomats in the Gulf say the Gulf states might sign the NPT, to please the United States and to deprive regional rivals Iran and Iraq of a pretext to stay outside the treaty.

In Damascus Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharra and Arab League Secretary General Essmat Abdul

Meguid met Tuesday to discuss the league's proposed treaty.

The two men "insisted on the necessity for Arabs to refuse to sign the (extension of the) NPT if Israel does not join up," said the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA).

The signature of the NPT is the only way to stop the nuclear arms race in the region," it added.

The Syrian government daily Tishrin warned Tuesday that Arab countries would not tolerate Israeli "nuclear blackmail" indefinitely.

"By refusing to sign the NPT, the Jewish state is creating the conditions for a proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region and opening the door to an arms race," it said.

"Israel's attachment to its nuclear arsenal is a direct threat to the Arabs, who could not indefinitely tolerate being subject to Israel's nuclear blackmail without thinking of acquiring this weapon themselves."

"If the international community is keen to reach a just and comprehensive settlement in the region it should compel Israel to sign the NPT," Tishrin added.

Dr. Abdul Meguid was also to meet President Hafez Al Assad during his two-day visit before travelling to Lebanon on Wednesday.

Russia on Tuesday defended its decision to sell nuclear reactors to Iran despite U.S. protests, and said the deal posed no military threat.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said on Monday Washington was "deeply concerned" about Russia's plans to provide the reactors, fearing Iran will use them in a crash programme to develop nuclear weapons.

But Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigory Karasin told a briefing: "We are convinced it will not pose any threat of creating military potential."

(Continued on page 7)

## King reaffirms commitment to comprehensive peace

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday reiterated Jordan's commitment to achieving a comprehensive peace in the Middle East region.

The King, in a meeting with foreign media representatives accredited in Jordan at the Mawaa Palace, said Jordan wanted peace in the Middle East based on the principles agreed upon in the Madrid conference, which launched Arab-Israeli negotiations in 1991.

The King said Jordan did not have any ambitions outside its territory and

wanted to see improvements in the living standards of the people of the region in an atmosphere of security and stability.

On Jerusalem, the King said Jordan was committed to preserving and safeguarding the Islamic shrines there and would retain its historic custodianship of the holy sites until the Palestinians reach a final agreement with the Israelis in negotiations on the Holy City and Jewish settlements and other issues that are scheduled to begin in 1996.

Jordan's position on the

holy sites in Jerusalem is fully compatible with international legitimacy and laws, the King said.

The King's meeting with the journalists was attended by Her Majesty Queen Noor, His Royal Highness Prince Hamzeh Ben Al Hussein, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem, His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, the King's military secretary, Her Royal Highness Princess Ghida Talal and Deputy Prime Minister and Information Minister Khaled Karaki.

## Yemen: Saudis block progress in talks

DUBAI (AFP) — Yemen accused Saudi Arabia Tuesday of blocking progress in negotiations aimed at settling their border dispute and dismissed talks of concessions by Riyadh.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh said: "We are still awaiting results" from three weeks of negotiations with Saudi Arabia.

On Sunday his deputy prime minister, Abdul Kader Rajummal, a member of the Yemeni delegation to the talks which opened on Jan. 23, said Saudi Arabia had agreed in principle to mark out the whole of its border with Yemen and dropped opposition to possible international arbitration.

But diplomats in Riyadh reached with scepticism to the announcement.

Mr. Saleh accused Saudi Arabia of insisting on distinguishing between the borders of former North and South Yemen, which were unified in May 1990.

Mr. Saleh said Yemen wanted to delineate the entire border from the Red Sea in the west to Oman in the east.

Yemen has called for a settlement of all outstanding issues, not just border demarcation.

Syria and Egypt have mediated in the dispute which has flared up into armed clashes, the latest on Jan. 10 in which more than 50 people were killed, according to diplomats.

Yemen accused Saudi Arabia of massing troops on the border last month after the Riyadh talks had begun. Sanaa wants a complete normalisation of ties with Riyadh, but accuses Saudi Arabia of harbouring exiled southern Yemeni leaders ousted in the May-July 1994 civil war.

Officially the Saudis have only signalled their intention to try to settle the issue of the border between northern Yemen and three provinces of Najran, Jizan and Assir.

King Fahd, who chaired a cabinet meeting on the dispute Monday, said Saudi Arabia "does not harbour any aggressive intention towards its neighbour" and wants the negotiations with the Yemeni brothers to succeed in an atmosphere of understanding.

But the Saudi statement did not mention any agreement with Yemen. In a pointed remark, Mr. Saleh noted that Yemen and its people had existed for centuries "and not for 60 years" — unlike Saudi Arabia, which was created in 1932.

The exasperated tone of Mr. Saleh's speech suggests he has obtained nothing since agreeing in January to recognise the 1934 Taif accord.

(Continued on page 7)

## Iran: Fighting internal Iraqi matter

TEHRAN (R) — Iran on Tuesday denied involvement in what it said was fighting between Iraqi forces and opposition guerrillas in southern Iraq. "We deny the Iraqi report. This matter was a purely internal Iraqi affair," a Foreign Ministry spokesman told Reuters. Iraq said on Monday its forces repulsed an attack by a "large armed group belonging to the Iranian regime" during the weekend. A Baghdad Foreign Ministry spokesman described the attack as "flagrant Iranian aggression." The Iranian spokesman said: "This matter has nothing to do with (U.N. Security Council) Resolution 598, which Iran respects fully." The Iraqi statement on Monday accused Iran of being behind the fighting, in breach of the terms of the resolution which formed the basis of a 1988 ceasefire that ended eight years of war between the two neighbours. The Tehran-based Iraqi opposition group, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, which is fighting Iraqi forces in southern Iraq marshlands close to Iran, did not have an immediate comment when contacted by Reuters.

## 8 killed, 23 injured as truck rams buses

By Rana Hussein  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Eight people were killed and 23 were injured, five of them critically, early Tuesday in the second worst road accident reported in the Kingdom this year.

Police and Civil Defence Department (CDD) reports said the accident occurred south of Qatranah, 90 kilometres from Amman, at about 7.45 a.m. It involved a trailer and two public buses that ply the Amman-Karak-Hassan-Amman route. The accident was attributed by traffic officials to slippery roads that caused the trailer driver to lose control of his vehicle.

The trailer slid and swerved to the left lane, lost control and shot across the divider to smash into two oncoming buses. The trailer turned over while the two buses were crushed, according to traffic officials who investigated the scene of the accident.

The strong impact caused the complete wreckage of the two buses. Passengers' belongings were scattered over the bloody scene.

The CDD said that in less than 40 minutes the injured were taken to three hospitals in Karak.

An official at Karak government hospital, where 17 casualties were admitted, told the Jordan Times that four victims were critical and were transferred to King Hussein Medical Centre in Amman. The official added that four people were pronounced dead on arrival.

Motorists should drive slower than the required speed limit when it is raining or road vision is not clear," the official said.

This is the second worst road accident to take place in one week. On Feb. 7, five police officers were killed and nine more were injured on the Irbid-Mafraq road in a bus accident.

Last year bus accidents claimed the lives of more than 50 people.

Traffic department's statistics of 1994 showed that 443 people were killed in road accidents which left 12,516 people injured.

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## Shootout and killings reported in Sanaa

SANAA (AP) — Several people were wounded in a two-hour shootout Monday when security men tried to arrest a currency dealer in the Yemeni capital, residents reported.

Security sources said the dealer, Mohammad Al Mujalli, was arrested. He was wanted for smuggling large amounts of dollars abroad as the government grapples with severe economic problems in one of the most impoverished countries in the Arab World.

The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, declined to give any other details.

But residents said that the dealer and his entourage fired on the police officers when they came to arrest him. Bazookas were also used in the gunbattle.

An official announcement later said the shootout was between security forces and a gang of car thieves. Auto theft is on the increase in the capital.

The gunplay was one of the worst such incidents in the city since last summer's civil war between southern secessionists and the northern-dominated government of President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The residents said a number of people were wounded but did not know the extent of their injuries or whether any had died.

Guns and other automatic weapons still proliferate in this mainly tribal country on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula.

The authorities, whose writ often does not run in remote areas, have never been able to disarm the tribesmen.

Security sources confirmed that Ali Jameel, a member of the Yemen Socialist Party based in southern Yemen, was killed outside his Sanaa home in a drive-by shooting Saturday.

They said it was the first political assassination since the civil war, which had been preceded by a plague of killings as the rivalry between Mr. Saleh and southern socialist leader Ali Beidh intensified.

## Israeli couple's suicide sparks debate, sympathy

TEL AVIV (AP) — The double suicide of Yosef and Tsila Abrahami, an elderly couple in their 80s, launched Israel Monday into a debate of the right to choose when to die.

Most Israelis who phoned radio talk shows said they supported the Abrahamis' decision to end their lives and a second couple, identified only as the Yaaris by Israeli media, tried to commit suicide with an overdose of sleeping pills.

The Yaaris were both in serious condition at the Rambam hospital in Rehovot, doctors said.

The couple, aged 80 and 81, decided to end their lives when they realised Mrs. Yaari's cancer was worsening, Israel Radio said. Her husband did not want to live without her, it added.

Unlike the Abrahamis however, the Yaaris were rushed to the hospital in a coma and hooked up to machines. Relatives later cried when they heard Mrs. Yaari was showing signs of improvement, Israel Radio said.

Health Minister Efraim Sneh, asked why people were not allowed to decide their time of death, said "I don't know if anyone has the

Jameel had run against Hameed Al Ahmar, son of the powerful Parliament Speaker Sheikh Abdullah Al Ahmar, in a particularly vituperative race in the 1993 parliamentary elections and lost.

At the time, the contest between the two rivals touched off gunfights between their tribal supporters and several people were killed. The feud has not abated.

Sheikh Abdullah leads the northern, tribal-based Islamic Islah Party, which rules in a coalition with Mr. Saleh's General People's Congress.

Sheikh Abdullah has been in Saudi Arabia for the last month for talks aimed at defusing an explosive border dispute following Syrian and Egyptian mediation.

The dispute, which dates back to the 1930s, has triggered a series of frontier clashes, with fatalities on both sides.

King Fahd and other Saudi leaders have been speaking positively about progress in the talks, as has Sheikh Abdullah. But no concrete results have yet emerged.

Travellers from the Wayla region in Al Kaffal, part of northern Saadeh province where border tension has been high, said that clashes erupted Saturday between Yemeni tribesmen and other clans who support the Saudis.

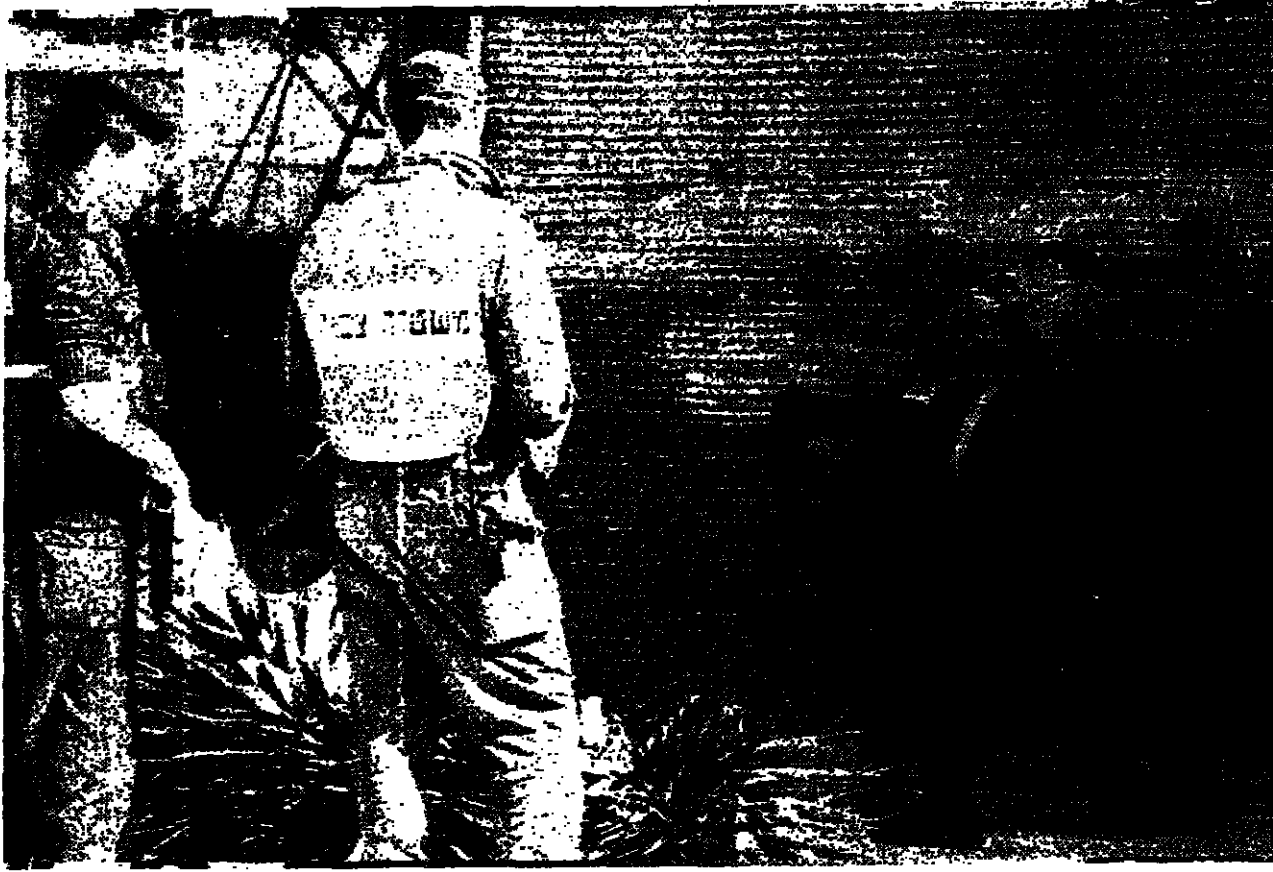
The fighting erupted when the tribesmen tried to stop Saudi border guards setting up checkpoints in the disputed region. No casualties were reported.

The Interior Ministry said a gang of criminals shot and killed a Yemeni policeman and wounded four of his colleagues in a shootout near Sanaa on Monday.

Rajeh Muthar Al Suwaidi was killed as he and his colleagues tried to free a Yemeni man taken hostage by the 20-strong gang holed up in a house.

The kidnappers surrendered after an hour-long shootout in which rockets were fired.

The ministry said all the gang would be put on trial.



Israeli borderguards watch their colleagues checking a Palestinian youth entering the Ibrahim Mosque in Hebron on Tuesday to attend the prayer commemorating the first anniversary of the massacre of 29 Palestinians by a Jewish settler (AFP photo)

## Hebron wounds still fresh a year on

HEBRON, occupied West Bank (R) — Sitting in a wheelchair on his porch, Yusef Abu Al Halaweh has a view of the grave of the Jewish settler who put a bullet in his spine during the Hebron mosque massacre a year ago.

"Look. They always come and pray next to his grave. You see they have put up a monument for him and now they have fixed lights around it," the 34-year-old Palestinian said in a faint voice.

Mr. Abu Al Halaweh, who cannot move his legs and has lost most movement in his arms, did not mention gunman Baruch Goldstein's name once during an interview with Reuters as the first anniversary of the Feb. 25 slaughter approached.

But he said he could not understand how a man who sprayed bullets into nearly 200 Muslim worshippers in the middle of the Holy Month of Ramadan last year could be treated with such honour at his burial place, in a Jewish settlement.

Local hospitals had said more than 30 Palestinians died on the day of the massacre and that more than 130 others were wounded. Goldstein, a U.S.-born settler, was killed by survivors in the Al Ibrahim mosque.

The massacre left a lasting impact not only on the families of the Palestinian victims but also on the occupied territories, Israel and the peace process.

Militants from both the Hamas Islamic Resistance Movement and Islamic Jihad who swore to avenge the mass killing, retaliated with at least six suicide bombings inside Israel that killed scores of Israelis.

Israel responded by sealing off the occupied territories with a ring of army roadblocks, measures condemned by Palestinians as collective punishment.

The attacks and Israeli closures are threatening the Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace deal signed five months before the massacre.

For the Palestinian victims and their families, the year since the massacre has been a struggle and a time to learn how to live with new realities.

Mr. Abu Al Halaweh, who once prided himself on his strength when he worked as a home builder, now needs round-the-clock care.

Living a few hundred metres away, 34-year-old Fatma Al Jaabari, who lost her husband Suleiman in the mosque, stays up late to sew shoes for a local factory. She earns less than \$3 a day with which she feeds her 10 orphaned children.

Ms. Jaabari's oldest son, Maher, 17, has had to quit school to help feed his brothers and sisters.

"I must cope. I am now their mother and their father," Ms. Jaabari said as fingers on the triggers of Uzzi sub-machineguns, settlers strut the streets, surrounded by the palpable

hatred of a burgeoning Arab under-class.

Israel's grip on the city is felt nowhere more than at Ibrahim Mosque.

When the army reopened the shrine last November, Jews were allocated the grand entrance, the Arabs a side gate. The same number of Jews are allowed in to pray as Palestinians, although only a few hundred Israelis live in Hebron.

Around the complex, most Palestinian shops have shut.

Abdul Abu Qweida, 43, has kept his bakery going, but run up debts of \$3,000 in 12 months.

"I sell four or five times less bread now than before the killing," he said. "People just don't come any more."

"There are too many checkpoints, too many soldiers and too much trouble. I just can't see an end to it."

He is waiting for the army to lift a ban imposed on Palestinians entering Israel when suicide bombers killed 21 people on Jan. 22.

"I will close the bakery and go to work in Israel to pay off my debts. What else can I do?"

Thirteen-year-old Abdul Karim Fakhoury opens his grandfather's tourist emporium after school.

"Before the massacre we used to sell some things — not a lot, but enough. Now we don't sell anything," he said.

## \$3.9m Somalia theft seems inside job — U.N.

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The theft of \$3.9 million from a U.N. office in Mogadishu last April was either an inside job or committed with the help of an insider, a U.N. report said on Monday.

No one has yet been accused of carrying out the crime, and the investigation, helped by Scotland Yard detectives, is continuing.

But because of sloppiness which allowed the money to be spirited out of the U.N. compound in the Somali capital, a senior U.N. official resigned — though he is contesting a U.N. decision to treat his departure as a summary dismissal.

Another official's repatriation grant and annual leave balance have been withheld as punishment, and a third has been reprimanded and transferred.

A team of three Scotland

Yard detectives, which arrived a month after the robbery and remained in Mogadishu for two weeks, told the United Nations: "Forensic evidence and witness accounts give strong indication that the theft was committed by or at least with the assistance of an inside agent."

There is no direct evidence available to identify the person(s) responsible.

Parts of the U.N. report, published as the Somalia operation is drawing to a close, read more like a "Keystone Kops" episode or a comedy of errors.

In a breach of the first rule of any investigation, the cashier's office where the theft was committed "was not preserved in its original state because the UNOSOM (U.N. Operation in Somalia) director of administration did not consider it necessary."

But examination of the filing cabinet, together with pictures of the crime scene taken by investigators, "yielded certain assumptions regarding possible perpetrators, one of them being that the thief or thieves were insiders or had help from an insider."

"No more can be said in this regard because the case remains open," the report added.

It also said investigators "found an incredible lack of concern on the part of the UNOSOM administration for security in the handling and safekeeping of the large amount of cash used in the mission."

To begin with, the money had been kept in the bottom drawer of a reinforced filing cabinet.

But the thief or thieves also bungled their job. Three

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**PROGRAMME TWO**

17:00	Diplodo
17:30	Envoye Special "Magazine"
18:00	News in French
19:30	Ramadan in the World
19:45	Get to Know Your Body
20:30	Law and Order
21:10	The Drowning Place
22:00	News in English
22:30	Snowy River
23:59	Feature Film

**PRAYER TIMES**

04:57	Fajr
06:15	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:59	Dhuhr
14:56	Asr
17:25	Maghrib
18:45	Isha

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The Evangelical Local Church in  
Amman  
Tel. 811295

**WEATHER**

Bulletin supplied by the Depart-  
ment of Meteorology.

Temperatures will rise slightly  
with a chance of scattered showers  
and winds northwesterly moderate.  
In Aqaba, skies will be partly  
cloudy, winds northerly moderate  
and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman	5/13
Aqaba	11/23
Jericho	5/14
Jordan Valley	10/19

Yesterday's high temperatures:  
Amman 10 Aqaba 22. Humidity  
readings: Amman 98 per cent,  
Aqaba 43 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Khalil Ismaeel	714451
Dr. Jun' al-Dhiyal	759448
Dr. Yousef Abdo	64916
Dr. Mohammad Al Ghoul	791730
First pharmacy	661912
Fendous pharmacy	72136
Al Asma pharmacy	670155
Najrah pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	649455
Shawabati pharmacy	637660
Najourh pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	847632
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Police	620341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	617101
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896391
Public Security Department	63021
Hotel Complaints	615831
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	661646
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	121
Emergency Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs	641101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	626381
Company	626381
RJ Flight Information	08-53230
Queen Alia Int'l Airport	08-53230
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Human Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	642816
Akshab Maternity, J. Amn	642816
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmashani	6641714
Shmashani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	645845
Al-Musharraf Hospital	6672719
The Islamic, Abdal	6661237
Al-Ahli, Abdal	661646
Italian, Al-Mulajroon	7771013
Al-Bashir, J. Asrafich	77511126
Army Hospital	89161115
Great Catholic Hospital	6224050
Amal Hospital	674155
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
07:45	Aqaba (RJ)
08:35	Jeddah (RJ)
08:55	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:45	Larnaca (RJ)
10:35	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
16:35	London (RJ)
16:45	Istanbul (RJ)
17:55	Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
18:10	Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
18:10	Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
18:30	Brussels, Paris (RJ)
18:35	Rome (RJ)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
08:30	Aqaba (RJ)
09:30	Rome (RJ)
10:35	Brussels, London (RJ)
10:50	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
11:05	Istanbul (RJ)
11:15	Colombo (RJ)
11:40	Aqaba, Cairo (RJ)
12:00	Riyadh (RJ)
12:30	Aden (RJ)
12:45	New Delhi (RJ)
21:25	Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
22:45	Sinai (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
07:45	Beirut (ME)
08:30	Cairo (MS)
11:30	Sinai (YV)
11:30	Sinai (YV)
12:00	Jeddah (SV)
12:00	Colombo (RJ)
12:00	Shanghai (AH)
14:00	Khartoum (SD)
14:00	Beirut, Karachi (PK)
22:00	Larnaca (CY)
HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Dep. Amman: 8:00 a.m. every Monday	
Dep. Amman: 5:00 p.m. every Monday	
Dep. Amman: 7:30 a.m. every Sunday	
Arr. Amman: 5:00 p.m. every Sunday	
MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	
Apple	700/400
Banana	600
Banana (Mukammal)	620
Cabbage	140/80
Carrot	200/120
Cauliflower	100/60
Cucumbers (large)	200/120
Cucumbers (small)	300/200
Eggplant	270/170
Garlic	850/600
Grape Fruit	280/170
Lemon	270/170
Marrow (large)	180/100
Marrow (small)	300/200
Onion (green)	340/200
Onion (dry)	320/250
Orange	300/300
Pepper (hot)	100/800
Pepper (sweet)	400/320
Potato	330/200
Radish	180/100
Sprouts	100/60
String Beans	300/200
Tomato	300/180
Turnip	180/120

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Preachers told to stick to prepared text

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has told its Muslim preachers to stick to texts prepared by religious authorities for their Friday open air prayers, newspapers reported Tuesday. The reports did not give reasons for the instructions but mosque sources said the ministry had received complaints some preachers were bypassing the prepared text to attack Israel, Russia and the Serbs. President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, 78, issued the instructions in a letter for the Islamic affairs and endowments ministry, which summoned Muslim clerics on Monday, the reports said. "The president urged Friday preachers to stick to the content of the sermons prepared by the ministry to achieve benefits and preserve public interests," the semi official daily Al Itihad said. It quoted Islamic Affairs and Endowment Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al Khazraji as asking the scholars to "implement the president's letter in text and spirit." Most Muslim clerics in the UAE are foreigners, especially from Egypt, Sudan, Syria and Jordan.

### Weizman declines reconciliation visit to Germany

BONN (AFP) — Israeli President Ezer Weizman has declined an invitation to attend a ceremony of reconciliation in Germany on May 8 celebrating the end of World War II in Europe, diplomatic sources said Monday. An Israeli embassy spokesman said Mr. Weizman would not visit Germany in May, even though May 12 sees the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states. The Israeli head of state was also to have addressed the German parliament on May 10. The weekly Der Spiegel had earlier reported in its edition published Monday that Mr. Weizman had turned down an invitation from German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to attend the May 8 ceremonies. While Mr. Weizman had accepted to visit in principle, according to Der Spiegel, the magazine said he changed his mind in the face of government pressure when the invitation was made public.

### Iraq lobbies Morocco, Tunisia on sanctions

RABAT (AFP) — Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Said Al Sahaf met Abdul Latif Filali, the Moroccan prime minister, in Rabat Monday as Baghdad stepped up efforts to get U.N. sanctions on its economy lifted. Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi leader, also sent an emissary to see President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia Monday to discuss the sanctions imposed on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. The emissary, Latif Nassif Jasssem, Iraq's labour minister, arrived in Tunis from Tripoli, where he had put Iraq's case to Libyan leaders during a tour of Arab states in North Africa.

### Rushdie is 'surprised' to be alive

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — British writer Salman Rushdie, speaking on the eve of the sixth anniversary of an Iranian death sentence against him, said Monday he was surprised to be alive. "I myself am surprised by the fact that I'm still in one piece and reasonably functioning," Mr. Rushdie said in an interview on Swedish television. The Indian-born author said he had just completed a novel that took him five years to write and was in good spirits. "I'm in the happy position of being an unemployed writer," the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued a fatwa against Mr. Rushdie in 1989 over his novel "The Satanic Verses," which many Muslims feel blasphemes their faith. The current Iranian government has refused to lift the sentence. Asked his opinion of politicians after spending six years in hiding, Mr. Rushdie said: "I think politicians have to balance so many interests, and often the easiest interest to sacrifice is the human rights interest. The problem is that Iran appears to get away literally with murder. It seems not to matter how much evidence is discovered against Iran, how much evidence or involvement in disgraceful actions of all sorts."

### Turkey opens straits one-way as fog eases

ANKARA (R) — Turkey reopened the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits to one-way traffic on Tuesday after dense fog which brought navigation to standstill for two days eased. "From 3 a.m. (0100 GMT) we have started calling in ships waiting in the Aegean to start sailing through," a traffic control officer for the Dardanelles said. "South to north traffic is flowing now. For the reverse direction, we will be letting through only piloted vessels to begin with," he told Reuters from Canakkale town on the Asian side of the Strait. The Bosphorus channel, cutting through Istanbul and linking the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara, was also opened to northward traffic, officials told the state radio.

### Group urges Iran to lift ban on paper

DUBAI (R) — The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has urged Iran to lift a ban on the Jahan-e-Eslam daily, which is close to hardline circles in the Islamic republic. "As a non-partisan organisation of journalists dedicated to the defence of press freedom throughout the world, CPJ fears that Jahan-e-Islam has been banned simply for having exercised its right to free expression," the committee said in a statement received by Reuters on Tuesday. It urged the Iranian government "to lift the ban and allow Jahan-e-Eslam to resume publication." An editor of Jahan-e-Eslam in Tehran told Reuters on Monday that an unintended parallel drawn by the daily between Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and a comical television character called "Dear Uncle Napoleon" is behind the ban. An Iranian official in charge of the press said violations by the paper included actions against the security and honour of the country, affronting Islam and Iran's supreme leader and libelling authorities. The daily Salam said on Monday. Jahan-e-Eslam was run by Hadi Khamenei, the younger brother of Iran's spiritual leader.



## Jordanian-Palestinian committee draws list of customs-exempted goods

AMMAN (Petra) — A technical Jordanian-Palestinian committee entrusted with implementing the Jordan-Palestine trade agreement which was signed in Amman on Jan. 26 opened a two-day meeting in Amman Tuesday.

This list will have items added at later stages until complete exemption of fees and duty on all goods will be achieved, said Mr. Haddadin after the opening session.

He said that the lists will be revised every six months with a view to implementing the mutual agreement and increasing the number of goods that will be exempt from duty.

Under the terms of the 11-point agreement, the two sides will facilitate the exchange of national products and services, set up joint ministerial committee to monitor the exchanges, form teams of experts to study import-export procedures, give due importance and urgency to the reconstruction of bridges on the River Jordan to facilitate trade and transit of goods, embark on measures to create joint free zones in the Jordan Valley and begin a study on linking the power grids of Jordan and Palestine.

## Talks to organise exchange of agricultural produce, expertise between two banks of Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian and Palestinian officials Tuesday opened talks here to reach an agreement that would organise the exchange of expertise in agriculture and ensure the continued flow of agricultural products across the River Jordan.

Azzam Tubbeileh, under-secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture in the Palestine National Authority (PNA), said that the two sides discussed various aspects of the potential agreement which will also cover cooperation in exchanging expertise to fight off agricultural pests, conduct agricultural research and in

veterinary services. Speaking at the meeting, Mr. Tubbeileh voiced the Palestinian people's appreciation and gratitude to Jordan for its permission to allow the agricultural products to transit through Jordanian territories on their way to neighbouring Arab states and for allowing Palestinian agricultural products to be marketed in the Kingdom over the past decades of occupation.

Mr. Ben Tarif said that the government, under directives from His Majesty King Hussein, was committed to extending assistance to the Palestinian people on all levels to help them confront and deal with the difficulties facing them and enable them to regain their full rights.

## Ministry steps up efforts to remove beggars from streets

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Social Development is exerting more efforts to rid the streets of beggars and homeless people and deal with their problems in cooperation with the voluntary associations and the Public Security Department, according to Minister of Social Development Salwa Damsan-Masri.

Rehabilitation of beggars takes place in cooperation with other organisations and aims at enabling the homeless and beggars to earn a living.

Mr. Ben Tarif outlined the Jordanian agricultural situation over the past two decades, noting that the Kingdom is now in a position to export large amounts of vegetables, fruits, poultry meat, olive oil and livestock.

Mr. Ben Tarif said that the Jordanian government was keen to ensure the free flow of agricultural products between the two sides, in implementation of the Jordan-Palestine trade agreement signed in Amman last month.

One thousand four hundred homeless and beggars from different parts of the country were rounded up last year by the ministry in cooperation with other organisations.

But Mrs. Masri stressed that part of the people who beg as a profession are referred to the police and courts to deal with their cases.

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## Palace of Justice to be completed by next June

AMMAN (Petra) — Nearly two thirds of the construction work at the new Palace of Justice in Amman has been completed and the Ministry of Public Works which is undertaking the project expects it to be completed by June next year.

Mr. Sabagh said that the huge complex would house 11 courts, including, among others, the first instance court, municipality courts as well as income tax and lands courts, courts of appeal together with offices for the judges, hall for the lawyers and other facilities and utilities.

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## Laws on intellectual property essential for foreign investment

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Such piracy should be handled the same way any court in any country deals with "the theft of physical property," he said.

protected for 15 years in Jordan while the period is 30 years in Europe.

start from grassroots, he said.

Mr. Jones noted that Jordan had amended its copyright and related legislation in 1992, but said that the Kingdom has to bridge more gaps before its laws are compatible with international conventions to protect copyright and intellectual property rights.

Mr. Jones said Jordan was neither "notorious" for violating international copyright laws nor "famous" for enforcing respect for such rights.

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## 'Strategic aquifers in the south should not be used for irrigation'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The "Qa Disi" aquifer which straddles the Jordanian-Saudi Arabian border in the south is the Kingdom's strategic reserve of drinking water which, if handled carefully, could significantly help the country meet its needs for at least 30 years, two experts said Tuesday.

Mr. Puri put it differently. He said Qa Disi could meet the "medium-term challenge" facing Jordan in the water sector if the Kingdom utilises water from the reservoir under a carefully planned strategy and approach. Of course, he said, such a prediction was contingent on Saudi Arabia not shifting its present pattern of exploiting the resource.

According to reports, Saudi Arabia has increased its annual intake from the reservoir to 600 million cubic metres from 350 million cubic metres in 1991.

Dr. Salameh said that the environmental problems facing Jordan were of two types: The first brought about by external factors over which Jordan has no control, and the second, those which Jordan could do something about to prevent and address the effects already showing in its territory.

Global warming leading to declining rainfalls in Jordan — a 30 per cent drop in the last 50 years — belongs to the first category. "There is no magic solution to the problem," he said. "Global warming and damage to the ozone layer is not Jordan's doing, but Jordan is now paying the price for it."

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

### FILMS

- ★ Film entitled "The Terrible Tales of Mr. Bean" at the British Council at 7:00 p.m.
- ★ An epic drama entitled "Solomon's Northrop's Odyssey" (depicting the horrors of racial injustice in the United States) at the American Center at 2:30 p.m.

### PLAY

- ★ Play (in Arabic) entitled "Ye Who Are Hearing" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 9:00 p.m.

### SEMINAR

- ★ Seminar (in Arabic) entitled "The Crisis of the Left Between Reality and Imagination" with the participation of Dr. Ya'qoub Zayadin and Mr. Taysir Zabari at the Royal Cultural Centre at 9:00 p.m.

### EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Photo exhibition at the Friends of Archaeology Center.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings under glass entitled "Oriental Roots" by Fatima Rahou at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ "Young America" exhibit (with photographs featuring Americans of all ages) at the American Center.
- ★ Exhibition of works by Qasim Al Samir at the Housing Bank Complex Gallery.
- ★ Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also showing another exhibition of Arabic Calligraphy.
- ★ Exhibition of the works of Lebanese artist Amin Al Basma at Darat Al Fanun. Also showing works by contemporary Arab artists.
- ★ Educational works depicting the life of "Voltaire" at the French Cultural Centre.

## HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

### Crown Prince condole's Abed Rabbo

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday delegated Brigadier Abdullah Al Hababeh to condole the Abed Rabbo and Ashour families on the death of Ifta Eid Ashour, mother of Palestine National Authority (PNA) Information and Culture Department Director Yasser Abed Rabbo.

### Tafleh governor hosts iftar

TAFLEH (Petra) — Under directives by His Majesty King Hussein, Tafleh Governor Ahmad Al Lawzi Tuesday hosted an iftar for the poor in the Tafleh Governorate. Mr. Lawzi said it became an annual custom to host iftar banquets for the poor under the King's directives, to achieve social solidarity and integration.

### Minister receives Romanian envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Majid Al Azzam Tuesday received in his office at the Prime Ministry Romanian Ambassador to Jordan Anton Pascale. Dr. Azzam and the Romanian envoy discussed Jordanian-Romanian ties and means of enhancing them, especially in parliamentary fields.

### EIB official to arrive

AMMAN (Petra) — The deputy chairman of the European Investment Bank (EIB) is due to visit Jordan towards the end of the coming month. He is due to meet senior government officials to discuss cooperation between the bank and the government of Jordan in financing development schemes. During his three-day visit here, the bank official will conduct an appraisal of the schemes funded by the bank.

### Murad to question mayor's decision

AMMAN (Petra) — The chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, Haidar Murad, said Tuesday he planned to meet Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi Thursday to enquire about the reasons behind the municipality's decision to stop issuing licences for stores that sell cement in Tlaa Al Ali, Khaldi and Umm Al Summaq districts of western Amman. Murad said that his federation was keen on tackling problems that face federation members and merchants in Jordan.

### Foot outlets, factories closed for violations

SALT (Petra) — Eid Qataneh, governor of Balqa, Tuesday announced the closure of several food stores and restaurants as well as plastic factories and bakeries in Salt and the Balqa Governorate. He said that their owners had violated health safety regulations. The stores in question are in Ain Al Basha, Baqaa, Umm Dananir and Salt.

### Minister, Indian envoy discuss import of wheat

AMMAN (Petra) — India's Ambassador to Jordan Arun Kumar Bodhiraj met Health Minister Aref Batayneh Tuesday and discussed with him Jordan's prospective imports of Indian wheat. India is hoping to resume wheat exports to Jordan now that the Indian subcontinent is free of the plague that hit parts of the country last year. Dr. Batayneh said Jordan's decision to resume wheat imports from India hinges on a report by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) on the safety of imports from India. The minister said Jordanian authorities continually subject all food imports to laboratory tests before allowing them into the local markets.

### Weather to gradually improve

AMMAN (Petra) — The Department of Meteorology Tuesday forecast further unstable weather conditions in Jordan for Wednesday, with more scattered thunder showers. A statement from the department said a further drop in temperatures is expected Wednesday, but the weather conditions will improve Thursday.

### Fewer business, higher capital in 1994

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Industry and Trade last year registered 950 new industrial businesses which started operations in Jordan. The figure registered a slight drop — nearly four per cent — from the number of businesses in the previous year. A ministry statement said that despite the decline in the number of businesses, the total capital of the registered businesses in 1994 marked an increase of 10.6 per cent over the 1993 capital.

### CDD reports 462 accidents in January

IRBID (Petra) — The Civil Defence Department (CDD) said Tuesday that its men were involved with 462 incidents during last month.

Dr. Salameh presented the central theme of the workshop and Mr. Puri moderated the discussions.

Dr. Salameh said that the environmental problems facing Jordan were of two types: The first brought about by external factors over which Jordan has no control, and the second, those which Jordan could do something about to prevent and address the effects already showing in its territory.

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## Peru, Ecuador agree to truce

LIMA (R) — Peru and Ecuador agreed to a ceasefire in a 19-day border conflict but both claimed control of three disputed posts where they had clashed in dense, mountainous terrain in the Amazon jungle.

President Alberto Fujimori Monday announced his government had declared a unilateral ceasefire as of noon Tuesday (1700 GMT) and Ecuador later accepted it, saying it would cease all hostilities unless fired upon by Peruvian troops.

"A long and tense wait has concluded today with the ejection of Ecuadorean troops from our territory," he said in a brief televised address.

Peruvian troops had advanced "in the most difficult natural and geographic conditions imaginable," taking Cueva De Los Tayos Post, Base Sur Post and finally Tiwinza, Fujimori said, which he described as "a symbol of our national sovereignty."

The Peruvian flag was "waving there (at Tiwinza) once again... where it belongs," the president said.

But in Quito, Ecuador said

it had not lost a single post in the war.

It invited international observers and the press to go to the posts to show they were still under Ecuadorean control.

Peru, meanwhile, said it had invited a mission of observers of the four guarantor countries of a 1942 treaty that aimed to settle a 1941 territorial dispute to verify the ceasefire. The guarantors are the United States, Brazil, Argentina and Chile.

Mr. Fujimori said 38 Peruvians had died in combat in jungle terrain at the headwaters of the Cenepa River along a 48-mile (78 km) stretch in the Cordillera Del Condor yet to be demarcated as called for in the treaty.

At least 70 Peruvians have been wounded in the fighting, Peruvian officials say. Ecuador says 10 soldiers have died and 37 have been wounded. But unofficially, the casualty figures on both sides are reported to be higher.

Earlier in the day, Ecuador president Sixto Duran Ballen said a peace proposal made by guarantor nations of the treaty was acceptable.

"The mediating nations have finally come to realise what their responsibility is and have presented a new proposal that could lead to a ceasefire without Ecuador having to back down a single step," he told reporters.

He was referring to diplomatic talks from Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the United States meeting in Brasilia who said the peace talks had gained new impetus with Mr. Duran Ballen's acceptance of their proposal.

The 1942 Rio de Janeiro Protocol sought to settle the two nations' conflicting historical claims to a vast region in the Amazon by setting the boundaries along a 1,060-mile (1,705-km) stretch which includes the Cordillera Del Condor. Ecuador rejected the treaty in 1960 and there have been periodic clashes in the zone ever since, including a two-day war in 1981.

Mr. Fujimori said Peru was looking for a "definitive solution" to the border problem in the framework of treaty, meaning the demarcation of the final stretch dividing the two nations.

On Sunday night, Mr. Fujimori said Peruvian force

had begun an awaited assault on Tiwinza, an outpost surrounded by 4,300-foot-high (1,300 metre) hills about a mile inside Peruvian territory.

In Quito, Ecuadoran military officials Monday said Peruvian troops had launched an offensive with mortars and artillery fire against Ecuadoran positions and that Ecuadoran forces were responding to the attacks.

Three Peruvian warplanes have been downed and three helicopters have been lost in the conflict, Peru said Sunday. It had downed two Ecuadoran planes with surface-to-air missiles but Ecuador denied the claim, saying one plane had been hit but returned safely to its base.

Meanwhile the United States, which has been pushing Russia to end arms sales to Iran, Monday asked Moscow to show restraint in weapons sales to Peru.

The former Soviet Union was a major supplier to Peru and State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelly expressed concern that relationship continues under the Russian government.



A paramilitary trooper holds his machine gun mounted on a truck during a patrol through the violence-hit city of Karachi (AFP photo)

## Karachi death toll hits 78 in 2 weeks

KARACHI, Pakistan (R) — Gunmen killed 15 people, including a policeman and a 12-year-old boy, in attacks in Pakistan's southern port city of Karachi, taking this month's death toll to 78, police said Tuesday.

The latest killings underlined the challenge the violence poses to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government and its drive to attract foreign investment to Karachi.

"We are doing our best to pacify the city," she told newspaper editors at a dinner in Islamabad Monday night. The Sind provincial gov-

ernment, controlled by Ms. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party, has been holding inconclusive negotiations with the militant Mohajir National Movement (MQM), which has wide support among the Urdu-speaking majority of Karachi, Sind's main city.

The latest talks, which began in December, have failed to halt sectarian, ethnic and political vendettas which cost more than 800 lives last year and have taken 154 since Jan. 1.

Five bodies were found in Karachi's District West early

Tuesday and police identified one of them as a police constable.

The bodies had marks of torture and had their hands tied behind their backs. They were lying in an abandoned car, "one ambulance worker said. One body had been left in the car boot."

The corpse of another man, apparently killed in similar circumstances, was found Tuesday morning in a locality of District Central dominated by minority Shiite Muslims.

No group has claimed responsibility for the killings.

## U.N. helicopter downed in Angola

LUANDA (R) — A United Nations helicopter was brought down and damaged in western Angola Monday by gunfire from UNITA-held territory, a senior U.N. source said.

The helicopter, which was on its final approach to the UNITA-held town of Quibaxe, was hit by rifle fire but landed without injury to the crew or passengers, the source said. It later returned safely to Luanda.

An anti-aircraft missile was fired at but missed the helicopter before it landed. Bullets damaged a fuel tank.

The source said it was "a miracle" nobody on board was killed.

A peace agreement was signed between the government and UNITA in November and a UNITA congress in the central town of Bailundo endorsed the accord last weekend.

The source said UNITA forces in Quibaxe, about 150 kilometres east of Luanda, admitted firing at the helicopter but blamed "communication problems" for the incident.

The helicopter was making a reconnaissance flight in connection with the eventual placing of a group of U.N. observers in Quibaxe.

The source said the flight plan had been cleared with

UNITA. The U.N. protested over the incident to the UNITA delegation to a joint government and UNITA commission working in Luanda to oversee implementation of the peace agreement.

Over 300 U.N. observers have already been deployed in Angola. The U.N. Security Council agreed Wednesday to deploy up to 7,000 U.N. peacekeeping troops in Angola.

UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) has been fighting the ruling MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) since independence from Portugal in 1975.

## U.S. tour plane crash kills 8

TUSAYAN, Arizona (AP) — A plane flying tourists over the Grand Canyon lost an engine, crashed and burned while trying to return to an airport Monday, killing eight of the 10 people aboard.

Killed were seven passengers, all Taiwanese nationals, and the pilot, a Nevada man. Two other passengers, both women from Taiwan, were critically injured, said Maureen Oltrogge, a spokeswoman for Grand Canyon National Park.

Rescuers were hindered by rain, thick mud and patchy snow on the back roads of the Ponderosa Pine Forest south of the canyon.

"It's been a nightmare trying to get through the mud," said Lt. Robert Augustine of the Coconino County Sheriff's Department.

The twin-engine Piper Navajo flown by Las Vegas Airlines came to rest with its fuselage broken in two, its wings snapped off.

## Clinton's popularity rises — poll

WASHINGTON (R) — A new poll confirmed a recent improvement in President Bill Clinton's popularity.

The poll of 1,000 voters by KRC Research was conducted on Jan. 27-31, before a new furor erupted over Mr. Clinton's choice of Dr. Henry Foster to be surgeon-general.

It found 53 per cent of respondents viewed Mr. Clinton favourably, opposed to 42 per cent who viewed him unfavourably.

Senate majority leader Bob Dole, who is running for president, had a 49 per cent favourability rating, with 27 per cent viewing him negatively.

Mr. Clinton's favourability ratings rose around 10 points since the last survey by this organisation last October.

Faced with a choice between Sen. Dole and Mr. Clinton, 44 per cent said they would vote for the president and 42 per cent said they would support Sen. Dole.

The poll found high public support for a balanced budget amendment to the constitution, with 78 per cent backing the idea and only 15 per cent opposed.

Meanwhile the U.S. House of Representatives Monday opened debate on the most controversial of Republican crime bills — a proposal which President Clinton has vowed to veto — that would kill a 1994 programme to put more police on the country's streets.

The Republican crime bill would instead set up a new \$10 billion bloc grant programme for state and local governments to spend funds as they wish on law enforcement and crime prevention.

Democrats said the plan cuts out the core of last year's hard-fought crime package which passed with bipartisan support and predicted they could sustain a presidential veto.

The Republican bill drew an explicit veto threat from

Mr. Clinton Saturday, his first issued against the new Republican majority in Congress.

"The astonishing thing is, despite the urgent need for more police on our streets, despite our success in getting them there, some Republicans in Congress actually want to repeal this effort," Mr. Clinton said in his weekly radio address.

The crime bill debate has forced Republicans into the position of having to justify why they want to cut a programme for more police on the beat that has the support of communities and major police organisations.

During the debate which will continue through Tuesday, Democrats are expected to offer a plan to restore the police on the streets programme, permit local authorities to pay overtime for police to protect abortion clinics and to restore funds for school and after-school activities.

## Canadian general demoted over scandal

OTTAWA (R) — A Canadian army general was forced to step down the first high-ranking casualty of a series of scandals that have rocked Canada's military and tarnished its peacekeeping reputation.

The military's chief of staff stripped Major-General Brian Vernon of his command for misleading the government about a video that showed soldiers of a para-trooper regiment giving electrical shocks as part of an initiation ritual.

Gen. Vernon was in charge of the elite Airborne Regiment that was disbanded by the government last month. Gen. Vernon has been reassigned to military headquarters in

Ottawa. The regiment fell into disgrace after some of its soldiers on a U.N. peacekeeping mission in Somalia tortured and beat a Somali teenager to death. Other soldiers in the regiment were involved in a drunken shoot-up of a convent in Rwanda.

Canadians were later shocked by videotapes showing members of the regiment urinating and defecating on each other and simulating sodomy in an initiation ritual.

Another video showed Canadian soldiers on a United States peacekeeping mission in Somalia making comments about killing "niggers."

Last week in parliament,

Defence Minister David Collette said a new video had surfaced and he had been assured by military brass that it did not contain any new revelations.

But at a hastily called news conference, the minister was later forced to backtrack and admit that the third video showed soldiers testing their endurance to electric shocks and shaving heads. Hazing ceremonies are banned in the Canadian army.

Mr. Collette said he had relied on information given to him by his officials.

"We were misled, so the chief of defence staff has taken the proper action today," he said Monday in parliament.

## Britain, Germany mark reconciliation in Dresden

DRESDEN, Germany (R) — Britain and Germany deepened their post-war reconciliation with ceremonies to mark the 50th anniversary of the destruction of Dresden, one of the most merciless aerial bombardments of World War II.

Up to 35,000 civilians died in the raid on Feb. 13, 1945, which turned the famed baroque centre of Dresden into a roaring furnace but left military targets almost unscathed.

The attack has been called "Germany's Hiroshima" for the huge civilian death toll in the attack to hasten the end of a war which seemed almost won — and for the sheer destructive force unleashed.

The Duke of Kent, representing Britain's Queen Elizabeth, acknowledged Dresden's grief by joining over 30,000 of its citizens who converged on the bombed out Frauenkirche (Church of Our Lady) carrying candles in memory of their dead.

The duke came closer to an apology than any British representative before him by telling Dresdensers Monday: "We deeply regret the suffering on all sides in the war. Today we remember especially that of Dresden."

The city, an architectural gem, still bears the scars of the 2,560 tonnes of bombs and incendiaries that rained down on its residential centre from British planes inside four hours. American bombers followed in a second wave.

So strong was the blaze caused by incendiary bombs that it created a whirlwind, sucking oxygen from all directions and suffocating those it did not incinerate in seconds. Survivors were left to identify parents or children by their skeletons.

The Frauenkirche — whose huge stone cupola was once the centrepiece of Dresden's baroque glory — has been kept as a bombed ruin to serve as a reminder of the horrors of war.

But it is now to be rebuilt, and as a gesture of reconciliation the duke presented the sketch of a gold cross which will be given by British donors, including the queen and the government, to adorn the rebuilt dome.

"We've really been moved



From Left: Inspector General of the German Bundeswehr Klaus Naumann, Chief of the Defence Staff Field Marshal Sir Peter Inge, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff John Shalikashvili and the Duke of Kent

by the Duke of Kent giving us the cross and reaching out a hand of reconciliation," said Brigitte Roeder, a 70-year-old survivor of the bombing.

"We wouldn't have thought it possible," German President Roman Herzog told his compatriots in a keynote speech it was pointless to apportion blame to former enemies or try to weigh up one atrocity against another.

Mr. Herzog courted controversy by choosing Dresden for his speech marking what for Germany is an awkward series of 5th anniversaries reminding it of its own role at the end of the war, and its dark Nazi past.

Mr. Herzog had been criticised by some who feared that by coming to the place which symbolises Germany's suffering in the war, he would appear to be pointing a finger at Germany's wartime enemies or diminishing its own guilt.

But Mr. Herzog made clear at the main commemoration ceremony that even in Dresden there could be no such calculation.

"No one present in this room intends to indict anyone or expects anyone to show remorse or indulge in self-accusation. No one wants to offset the atrocities committed by Germans in the Nazi state against anything else," he said.

A British newspaper said Tuesday Britain should apologise for Dresden.

"Should Britain apologise for Dresden?" asked an editorial in the left-leaning Guardian.

"The answer has to be yes," it continued, "simply because it happened."

"We are not apologising to the Nazis or revising any verdict on ultimate responsibility for the war."

"Surely enough time has passed so that Britain, the U.S., Germany, Japan, Russia — everyone — can and should express their grief and shame without toting up a diplomatic scoreboard."

"Germany has handled the current proceedings in Dresden with tact and restraint," added the paper, "but the demonstrators with placards bearing the name of Grozny have a powerful point."

And the paper concluded: "Long after the anniversaries are over the weapons and the ideology of war will still be there, a heavier challenge for the future."

Other British newspapers considered that Britain had already come very close to saying sorry.

A front-page report in the Times said the Duke of Kent had "come close to apologising for the British role in bombing Dresden" and had thus broken "new ground" in Anglo-German relations.

The paper admitted the British were "nervous" about the anniversary.

However, it considered "the tension was eased to a large degree" by the British-

based Dresden Trust charity's plan to build the golden cross and orb on the Frauenkirche.

For the Telegraph, Monday's ceremonies were "an unprecedented show of reconciliation."

German newspapers gave the ceremonies front-page prominence and printed extensive extracts from President Herzog's speech, in which he said it was pointless to apportion blame to former enemies or try to weigh up one atrocity against another.

"Violence cannot be offset by violence," commented the Osnabruecker Zeitung daily. "President Herzog made this basic principle the crux of his speech yesterday (Monday)."

The newspaper added:

## Gene Kelly in hospital after mild stroke

LOS ANGELES (R) — Song and dance man Gene Kelly, the star of 'Singin' in the Rain' and other memorable Hollywood films, was in a Los Angeles hospital after suffering a mild stroke in his Beverly Hills home, his spokesman said. Mort Viner said the 82-year-old veteran movie actor was "aware and conversational." Cedars Sinai Hospital spokesman Ron Wise said Kelly was admitted to hospital on Feb. 7 and would remain there for the rest of this week. "He is in stable condition. He had a small stroke which does not appear to have caused any additional problems," Mr. Wise said. Kelly, who was presented with a Special Academy Award in 1951 in recognition of his contributions to the movie industry, suffered a serious stroke in July last year and stayed in the University of California Los Angeles Medical Centre for seven weeks. He also spent nine days in a San Francisco hospital in May, 1994, where he was treated for cellulitis — a bacterial infection of the skin. Kelly danced across the silver screen for more than 30 years. His first major film was 'Cover Girl' with Rita Hayworth in 1944. His other films included, 'Anchors Aweigh' (1945), 'The Pirate' (1948), 'The Three Musketeers' (1948), 'On the Town' (1949) and 'An American in Paris' (1951). Kelly choreographed most of his own dances and also directed a number of films, including 'Singin' in the Rain' (1952, co-directed by Stanley Donen), 'Holly Dolly' (1969), starring Barbra Streisand and 'The Cheyenne Social Club' (1970), featuring James Stewart and Henry Fonda.

Four Weddings, Pulp Fiction, top BAFTA nominations

LONDON (AP) — Four Weddings And A Funeral and Pulp Fiction, both likely Oscar nominees this year for best picture, headed the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) line-up Monday, receiving 20 nominations between them.

Forrest Gump received eight nominations in a list published a day before the announcement from Los Angeles of this year's Oscar nominees. Four Weddings, Mike Newell's romantic comedy, which has become the most commercially successful British film ever, got 11 nominations including Best Film, Best Director (Newell), Best Screenplay (Richard Curtis), and Best Actor (Hugh Grant). Pulp Fiction, the Quentin Tarantino crime drama honoured at last year's Cannes Film Festival, will compete for Best Film, Best Director (Tarantino), Best Actor (John Travolta) and Best Actress (Uma Thurman). Competing against both movies as best film are Forrest Gump, with Tom Hanks as a simpleton who survives three decades of social and sexual upheaval, and Quiz Show, Robert Redford's film about a real-life game show scandal in New York in the early days of television. The nomination for Quiz Show came as something of a surprise, since the film is not being released in Britain until Feb. 24. But the BAFTA rules this year were amended to extend the eligibility period to March 3, 1995, provided that the film has been screened previously for BAFTA members and will play in theatres for seven consecutive days to a paying audience before to March 3. Such Oscar hopefuls as Neil, Legends Of The Fall, The Madness Of King George, and Blue Sky are not up for BAFTAs because they will not have opened locally by March 3.

Julio: Here, kitty, kitty

MIAMI (R) — Spanish recording star Julio Iglesias is singing the blues since his pet cat, Mousty, vanished last week. Police theorise that the singer's feline friend ran away and was not the victim of a celebrity catnapping, according to the Miami Herald. Iglesias, 51, has been circulating "I'm lost" flyers, with a colour picture of the tabby cat lounging on Iglesias' golf cart. The singer has also asked his neighbours on Miami's exclusive Indian Creek Island to help find the cat. Among his neighbours are golfer Raymond Floyd, vacuum cleaner magnate Herbert Hoover Jr., Miami Dolphins football coach Don Shula and Saudi Prince Turki Bin Abdul Aziz.



Workers install an iron gate at the "Letten-bridge", the entry of the open drug scene near the Limmat riverbank at the former railway station of Letten in Zurich. Police announced the total closure of the open drug scene for Tuesday (AFP photo)

## Police close down Zurich drug market

ZURICH, Switzerland (AP) — Several hundred police closed down Zurich's market for hard drugs, the largest in Europe, overnight, three years after it was legalised in an attempt to control drug sales and drug abuse.

The hundred of so addicts remaining on the site, who left peacefully after the midnight deadline, were taken to reception centres to be sent back to their districts or countries of origin.

Only those of Zurich origin were allowed to stay in the city, where they were being offered special facilities, with clean syringes to prevent the spread of AIDS.

Police were under orders to arrest and charge any dealers found but they had already dispersed in the days before the well-publicised operation.

But the experiment became a victim of its own success with some 5,000 heroin and cocaine addicts — both Swiss and foreigners — congregating at the site, which also became a red light district littered with used needles and condoms.

Authorities decided to put an end to the experiment following several drug-related murders between dealers settling scores, attacks on police and mounting complaints from local residents.

They said 300 police officers would be deployed throughout the city in coming months to prevent dealers and addicts from resettling at the site or in other neighbourhoods.

To that end, police urged local residents Monday to ensure that building entrances and any backyard alleyways were secured and provided a special telephone number they could call to signal anything suspicious.

For the past few days authorities had been erecting metal and barbed wire-

barriers around "Toxicoland" to facilitate the police operation and prevent the return of the addicts and their suppliers.

The closure of the Letten market ends 25 years of a permissive policy towards drugs by the authorities in Switzerland's financial capital. Letten itself took over from the Platzpitz, a city square, which was a gathering place for addicts from 1987 to 1992.

In two decades the price of heroin has fallen in Zurich from 500 Swiss francs (\$385) per gram to 50 francs. Today dealers are offering it for free outside schools in a bid to hook new clients.

Switzerland has been conducting experiments in the best policy to combat drug abuse for several years, including the importation of heroin and the extensive use of the drug substitute methadone.

There has also been lobbying for the government to "nationalise" the drugs trade, taking it under federal control.





Chechen women with an automatic weapon walk to the front line in downtown Grozny. According to reports, Russia

sent reinforcements of several hundred naval personnel including Marines to the breakaway republic (AFP photo)

## Grozny inhabitants brave shelling to fetch water

GROZNY, Russia (AFP) — Bundled up in an old brown coat, her head covered with a red and yellow check headscarf, a Russian woman in her seventies struggles with her two small plastic buckets full of water.

Despite the nearby thud of artillery, like hundreds of other inhabitants in the besieged capital of the breakaway Republic of Chechnya, the old woman has been out to fetch water at the only supply point in this district in the south of the city, which has been spared bombing raids so far.

From dawn, people start converging on the old underground reservoir in the middle of a muddy field, some of them coming from more than five kilometres away.

Three old prams and a

metal trolley are parked in the vicinity, while their owners take advantage of the rare outing to exchange news on the latest districts to be hit by the Russian artillery.

"Nobody has analysed this water, but we don't have any choice," said a man, who was filling up his metal cans. A black rubber tube was fitted into the pierced pipework two days ago to enable people to help themselves.

A few yards away, Zarima and Roman Kharikhanov, brother and sister, are making their way homewards carrying two buckets. Three days ago a Russian plane bombed just next to the spring where they used to fetch their supplies. Since then they have preferred to go farther afield.

"We have nowhere to go and who would take us in now with our nationality?" said Zarima, a cheerful 20-year-old Russian girl, whose bright smile is a welcome relief from the overwhelming misery on faces everywhere in this city.

"We are used to the bombing, you can get used to anything," she added. Zarima, a bright red shawl over her head, had to give up her studies a year ago because of the economic chaos in Chechnya since its unilateral declaration of independence in 1991.

Fetching water is a daily preoccupation all over Grozny. "You can live without electricity or gas, but not without water," said Zaria Kuduzova, who had come to

fetch water at the artificial lake on the southern exit from Grozny.

The women get a teenager to help them across the lake, which is frozen over, but the ice is thin.

"The water isn't good to drink. I only come here for my two old cows," Daud Emordayev, 66, told AFP. His house in a nearby district was destroyed by a shell a week ago.

A few kilometres farther west, where the bombing raids on the capital are only a distant noise, the water situation is not yet critical: At Urus Martane, cars are parked in the bed of the river Gekhi, which is also frozen over. Their owners are still concerned about keeping their vehicles clean.

## Over 150 feared dead in Bangladesh train collision

DHAKA (R) — The Bangladeshi prime minister flew Saturday to the scene of a train crash in northern Bangladesh as rescuers huddled their way through twisted wreckage as they feared the death toll could top 150.

While officials insisted that fewer than 30 had died in the overnight collision near Dinajpur, close to the spot said this appeared to be an attempt to limit compensation payments to the victims' families.

"I know more than 100 bodies had been plucked from the rubble by daybreak," said one government rescuer, who declined to be identified.

"The number of injuries is no less than 500, maybe more, and dozens among them are simply fighting for their lives," he told a reporter.

The collision occurred late Friday when a passenger train travelling at high speed slammed into a stationary one at Hilly station near Dinajpur, 475 kilometres from Dhaka.

"This is a major accident involving two trains, one heavily crowded for a night trip," one reporter told Reuters.

"Nearly 18 hours after the accident I saw rescuers still battling through the twisted wreckage and pulling out bodies," he said.

"The official death count is something different," said another reporter in Joypurhat.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, who flew to the accident site with Communications Minister Oli Ahmed, expressed deep shock and ordered compensation for the victims.

She also visited some of

the injured and prayed for their early recovery, witnesses said.

"We are really puzzled by the official figures," said Motiur Rahman, editor of the local daily Utar Bangla, after visiting the scene.

"If we take it... then where have the truckloads of bodies people saw gone?"

"There is no formal search operation as such. Local people, helped by police, were seen cutting steel plates from the mangled coaches and taking out dead and injured," he said.

Mr. Rahman said Premier Zia had been deeply moved by horror tales told by wailing widows and bereaved parents and children.

He said he believed the final death toll could well top 200.

Akhbar Hossain, a student leader in Hilly, said he and his companions had retrieved 30 bodies in a single hour.

Railway officials speculated that the accident might have been due to "non-setting of points" or to faulty signals.

They said the Hilly station master and pointsman had been suspended on suspicion of neglecting their duties.

Witnesses said many of the injured had been taken across the Indian border just 100 metres from the crash site to hospitals in West Bengal state.

"Saving lives is the first priority, so India was the natural choice," one reporter quoted an official as saying.

Police in Khulna, a southern district town 280 kilometres from Hilly where one of the doomed trains had been heading, said they also feared the toll could rise to 200.

It was the worst train crash in Bangladesh since January

1989 when 135 people were killed and over 1,000 injured as two packed trains collided at Pubail 24 kilometres from Dhaka.

In a separate development, Bangladesh's opposition leader Sheikh Hasina said an agreement to end the country's 10-month political crisis was possible but doubted whether Prime Minister Zia would stick to it.

"She may back out as she has done on several occasions before," Mrs. Hasina told Reuters as negotiators sought to resolve what is known in Dhaka as the "battle of the two women."

Mrs. Hasina has led an opposition boycott of parliament which began last February as part of a campaign to drive from office a government she alleges is anti-democratic and willing to do anything to stay in power.

Almost the entire opposition handed in their resignations from parliament on Dec. 28 as the battle intensified to force Mrs. Zia to quit and allow a neutral caretaker government to supervise fresh elections.

Mrs. Hasina, said in an interview late Friday she was not interested in the constitutional niceties of where power should lie in the interim, now under intense discussion by negotiators.

The constitution vests executive power in the prime minister, who announced a day after the opposition resignation from parliament that she would step down 30 days before elections due in 1996.

But if there is no prime minister, who must be chosen from parliament, who wields power?

Mediators are trying to figure out how to give power temporarily to President Abdul Rahman Biswas, with

the opposition pressing for a constitutional amendment. Mrs. Zia has rejected the idea but one of her ministers has suggested a new flexibility on the issue.

Mrs. Hasina was impatient at such legalities. "It's a political decision. If you make the decision, everything can be resolved," she said.

"The trouble is they haven't decided what they really want to do. They are just making confusion and hoping in this way they can stay in power for a long time," she said.

Mistrust and dislike for Mrs. Zia, the widow of a former military president and who declined to be interviewed, was evident in everything Mrs. Hasina said.

The opposition leader is the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led Bangladesh to independence from Pakistan in a war in 1971 only to be killed by army officers four years later.

"For instance, the day we were handing in our resignations (from parliament) that woman said she was ready to do something and please would we wait," Mrs. Hasina said.

"We waited for two hours to give her a chance and nothing happened."

Government ministers are equally scornful of Mrs. Hasina. One, who asked not to be named, said of the same incident: "Hasina was well aware that the prime minister would announce her decision to step down 30 days before elections and went ahead with the resignations anyway."

Mrs. Hasina said she had no intention of returning to parliament. The opposition resignation have not yet been accepted in an attempt to give negotiators more time to end the battle.

## Investigators hunt for clues to Colombia air crash

CARTAGENA, Colombia (AFP) — Investigators searched Friday for clues to explain Wednesday's airliner crash in which 51 people died, the latest aviation tragedy in a country where drug terror, safety blunders and guerrilla attacks make flying a high-risk activity.

Civil Aviation Authority Director Alvaro Raad said technical problems appeared to be the most likely reason why the DC9 on a flight from Bogota to the coastal resort of Cartagena suddenly plunged to the ground and exploded.

Only one passenger survived the crash, a nine-year-old girl named Erika Delgado who was recovering in a hospital after suffering multiple fractures and emotional trauma.

"The impression we have so far without making conjectures is that there must have been a fault which was sufficiently serious to prevent the pilot from being able to report it," said Captain Estefan Gomez, head of the crash investigation team. "There are no signs of an explosion inside the aircraft."

Colombian officials invited a team from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration to help but added that until the DC9's "black box" flight and voice recorders were found it would be difficult to make much progress in the crash probe.

A local government official erroneously reported Thursday that the flight and voice recorders had been located by navy divers in the lake near the town of Maria La Baja, 330 miles (530 kilometres) north of Bogota,



Rescue workers carry the body of a victim of a nine-year-old girl reportedly survived the Colombian DC-9 crash outside Cartagena, crash (AFP photo)

where the plane came down.

As rescue teams paddling canoes across the lake brought out the last of the bodies and flew them by helicopter to a makeshift morgue in Cartagena, Capt. Gomez said in a radio interview that investigators had found marks gouged into the ground by the plane near where the wreckage was discovered.

This suggested the pilot attempted an emergency landing but crashed into an embankment at the edge of the water, he added. Both Capt. Gomez and Mr. Raad dismissed as irresponsible some reports suggesting the crash was caused by a terrorist bomb, saying none of the evidence supported such an argument.

Colombia has one of the world's worst air safety records, with several major disasters and a host of minor ones notched up in the last seven years. The International Airline Passengers Association advised its members in September 1993 to avoid flying in or out of Colombia.

Studies by the Association of Fatal Crashes between 1983 and 1992 showed that Colombia had an aviation accident rate 20 times higher than the United States and Canada.

The worst incidents included the November 1989 bombing by drug traffickers of an Avianca Airlines, killing 107 people. Another 137 died when an Avianca jet crashed near Cucuta Airport in March 1988 and 132 others perished when a Boeing owned by SAM, an Avianca subsidiary, slammed into the side of a mountain in May 1993.

Relatives of the dead in Wednesday's crash lost no time in blaming Intercontinental de Aviacion, the Colombian Airline that owned the plane on doomed Flight 256.

"That plane was held up for six hours before it left for emergency maintenance. It should never have been allowed to fly," shouted a man at Bogota Airport, who declined to give his name.

Intercontinental Managing Director Alfonso Ramirez denied the accusations, saying the delay was caused by airport congestion and the plane was in good condition despite being 29 years old.

Radio commentators, however, suggested that perhaps it was time for Colombia to look again at scrapping older planes and forcing airlines to renew their fleets.

During his three-day stay in India, Mr. Perry signed an agreement cementing bilateral defence ties which he said opened a new era in security relations between the two cold war antagonists.

Before India, Mr. Perry visited Pakistan, Israel and Egypt. He was the first U.S. defence secretary to visit India since the end of the cold war.

Mr. Perry warned Saturday that rising religious fundamentalism in South Asia posed a threat to stability in the region.

The Pentagon chief, in an interview to a television network before leaving for Washington, said people using violence in the name of religion were "destabilising" the region.

"We are concerned with people using religious cover for violent action for taking away the freedom of others," Mr. Perry said in reply to questions on the Muslim separatist campaign raging in India's northern Kashmir state.

"We see it going all over the world and we see plenty (of religious extremism) in South Asia and we are concerned over it, as it would prove to be a force for instability in the region," Mr. Perry told the Eyewitness network.

Mr. Perry said Washington's "new security relation" with New Delhi and Islamabad would help in resolving the Kashmir conflict.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training Kashmir's Islamic guerrillas. Islamabad denies the charge but extends moral and diplomatic support to the drive, which has claimed more than 10,000 lives since 1989 in the Himalayan region.

Kashmir has been the cause of two of the three wars India and Pakistan have fought since the 1947 independence of the South Asian subcontinent.

## Perry ends visit to India

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry left India for Washington Saturday at the end of a week-long trip to the Middle East and South Asia, U.S. officials said.

Mr. Perry left only hours before U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown was set to arrive in the Indian capital at the start of a five-day visit to promote business ties.

Mr. Perry spent the day touring an air force base and visiting the Taj Mahal in Agra, south of the Indian capital.

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## Italy's Dini prepares to form cabinet

ROME (R) — Lamberto Dini began work Saturday on forming Italy's 54th government since world war II as newspapers applauded his appointment but debated how long it would be before fresh elections were held.

The influential Corriere Della Sera declared the choice of Mr. Dini, the outgoing treasury minister, as prime minister-designate, "an honourable truce" following the bitter political row over the succession to Silvio Berlusconi who resigned on Dec. 22.

"Dini, a new chapter opens," was the banner headline on the front page of La Repubblica, a daily which has been one of the strongest opponents of media magnate Berlusconi.

Former central banker Dini gathered his closest aides at the Treasury Ministry Saturday as he set to work on a cabinet he has said will consist of technocrats drawn from outside the world of party politics.

Observers said he could have his list of ministers ready by the middle of next week and the signs are that his government will win broad support in parliament, at least initially.

Newspapers agreed that

Antonio Di Pietro, the former Milan magistrate who became a folk hero for his work in fighting corruption, was a leading candidate for either the post of justice or interior minister.

But Mr. Di Pietro repeated Saturday that he had no plans to "enter politics."

"I'm honoured by suggestions that I may be offered a job in government but I repeat that it is not my intention to play any role in politics," he told reporters in Milan.

The constitution does not allow either Mr. Dini or President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, the man who appointed him, to set a time limit on his premiership and political parties are already bickering over how long Mr. Dini should govern.

Mr. Dini, who is not a member of any party and only entered politics when Mr. Berlusconi made him treasury minister last May, said his government had a clear four-point programme.

He said the government must pass a mini-budget to rein in Italy's runaway deficit, overhaul the pension system, ensure fair representation in the media for all political parties and reform

the electoral system ahead of regional polls this spring. Billionaire businessman Berlusconi, swept to power in general elections 10 months ago, said that the Dini solution would only work if it were widely followed by electors.

"For the moment I'm saying goodbye, but I'll be back soon," Mr. Berlusconi told reporters.

Cesare Previti, coordinator of Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia party, told the daily La Stampa that the government could have its programme through parliament by April, paving the way for elections in June.

"This is a government that could be ready in a few days and could resign in early April," he said. "By June we can vote again to finally give this country a stable government."

But Umberto Bossi, leader of the Northern League whose mutiny brought down Mr. Berlusconi's seven-month-old coalition, said Mr. Dini's appointment would extend the life of the current parliament indefinitely.

"So much water will flow under the bridge before elections are held that Berlusconi will die of boredom and old age," Mr. Bossi said.

## Sonia Gandhi may not be averse to politics

NEW DELHI (AFP) — The widow of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi Saturday denied she authorised a family friend to say she would never take to politics, an indication that she might not be opposed to a political career.

Sonia Gandhi reacted sharply to a statement issued Thursday by Mohammad Yunus, a friend of Gandhi family, that the Italian-born woman had said she would never join a political party.

"I would rather beg in the streets of Delhi than join (a party) or allow my children to enter politics," Mr. Yunus quoted Sonia Gandhi as telling him.

An aide to Sonia Gandhi said here: "Gandhi has issued no statement nor authorised any statement on her behalf." Sonia Gandhi does not talk directly to the press.

Disidents in Congress (I) Party of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao have been urging the charismatic Sonia Gandhi to take to politics, but she has never publicly reacted to their demands.

Saturday's comments by her aide were the first indication since Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in May 1991 that Sonia, who enjoys tremendous clout in the Congress, may not be opposed to a political career.

Sonia Gandhi is widely believed to be pulling political

strings in the bitter inner-party struggle aimed at ousting Premier Rao.

A former federal minister, Arjun Singh, who quit the cabinet on Dec. 24 in a direct challenge to Mr. Rao, has met repeatedly with Sonia Gandhi and did so again Friday.

Political observers have said that Sonia Gandhi, who is counted among the most powerful figures in India although she holds no government or political post, may be quietly backing Arjun Singh.

Sonia married Rajiv Gandhi in 1968, but declined a Congress request to take up the party leadership after his assassination, enabling Mr. Rao to become India's ninth prime minister.

The Nehru-Gandhi dynasty ruled India for 40 years, beginning with Jawaharlal Nehru, the country's first premier, his daughter, Indira Gandhi, and her son, Rajiv.

Meanwhile nearly 180 per cent of whom Indians are convinced that politicians, cabinet ministers and the police are corrupt, according to a poll published in the Times of India Saturday.

Ninety-eight per cent of the 1,544 men and women surveyed in six cities said they were "convinced that politicians and ministers are corrupt," followed by the police

(97 per cent) and civil servants (88 per cent).

The poll said 63 per cent of the respondents felt that politicians were, on a scale of one to 10, the "most corrupt." Only two per cent thought politicians were honest.

Twenty-four per cent considered the police the "most corrupt."

The Times said 80 per cent of those surveyed said lawyers were dishonest and 66 per cent doubted the integrity of judges.

Another 55 per cent put journalists in the corruption league poll.

The poll was carried out in New Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore and Hyderabad.

"Corruption may be a global phenomenon... but there is more of it in India than anywhere else," the newspaper commented. "It has come to pervade all professions the public has to deal with, and it has grown in the last three to four years."

The paper said getting police help without paying bribes was considered the most difficult of all, while 66 per cent of people saw no chance of getting a gas, electricity or telephone connection without greasing palms, and 60 per cent had no hopes of admission into schools and colleges in a straightforward manner.



## Jordan Times

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## Will Russia refrain?

AS THE fighting in Chechnya intensified and Russian troops closed in on the presidential palace in Grozny, the U.S. joined other nations in criticising the Russian action. U.S. Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, scheduled to meet his Russian counterpart Andrei Kozyrev in Geneva Tuesday, said that Moscow's continued onslaught on Grozny has led to a setback to Russian progress towards democracy and to Moscow's isolation in the international arena.

The German foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, was the first Western official to raise the issue about the Russian military intervention by demanding that the conflict be discussed by the Western alliance. The French foreign minister, Alain Juppe, followed suit by calling on Moscow to explain its adventurous policy in that country. Ironically the Muslim world has been generally silent on the ferocious war that is taking place there.

At issue is the right to self-determination that is well-enshrined in the U.N. Charter and practically all the human rights treaties and conventions. Also at stake is Russia's territorial integrity which Russian President Boris Yeltsin seems determined to defend at all costs. This conflict between two perspectives needs to be resolved in favour of human rights and the right of the Chechen people to exercise their right to determine their own future. After all, the Chechens are not Russian people or even remotely related to the Russian people by either culture or religion.

Moscow is obviously going to the extreme by defending its territorial integrity at the expense of the Chechen people's right to self-determination. There is no valid legal argument under international law to suppress people and keep them under the direct political and military domination of another people by force.

It is high time that the Arab and Muslim worlds spoke out against the raging war that already took a heavy toll on the lives of thousands of innocent people most of whom are civilians. We cannot remain silent when even the Western world has begun to express concern. We must not repeat the same stance that characterised our collective posture on the Bosnian situation. We in Jordan also owe it to our Jordanian Chechens to speak up loud and clear on the fate of their brethren. Moscow must be served with notice that the world cannot keep its eyes closed in the face of the resort to raw power to suppress the Chechen people.

Moscow's interests could be better served by heeding the lessons of history. President Yeltsin should accept the fact that the conflict cannot be solved by the force of arms alone.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily Saturday voiced hope that the Israeli government and society will prove their desire for peace with the Arabs by deed rather than words. Commenting on His Majesty King Hussein's statements following Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's visit to Amman, the paper said that the King has reiterated Jordan's full commitment to the implementation of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty and expressed hope that the Israeli side will keep its own commitment too. Criticising the slow pace in the Israeli implementation of the treaty and its provisions, the paper said that Israel should realise that the treaty is not mere ink on paper. At the same time, the Israelis should realise that Jordan can by no means disregard lack of progress on the other Arab-Israeli tracks of talks and Israel's continued acts of repression against the Palestinians, added the paper. It said one cannot help expressing fears over Israel's commitment to peace in the light of the Rabin government's current behaviour towards the Palestine National Authority.

MOHAMMAD KAWASH, a writer in Al Dustour, Saturday criticised Washington's stand vis-a-vis the lifting of U.N. sanctions on Iraq and lashed out at the Arab countries' negative stand and their failure to end the suffering of their Iraqi brothers and sisters. The writer said every time the Security Council meets to review the sanctions, the United States fabricates a new accusation against Iraq to prevent the U.N. from lifting the sanctions. But, said the writer, France, Russia, China and Western firms are continuing the process of exercising pressure for ending the sanctions. He said a delegation representing British firms has just visited Baghdad to discuss economic relations and trade with Iraq and it is hoped that the British government will favour the lifting of the U.N. sanctions under pressure from the British business community as has already happened in France. The British delegation's visit came in the wake of visits by French, Chinese and Russian delegations to discuss relations, said the writer. He said that economic considerations could be instrumental in ending the sanctions.

## Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fakhed Fakhed

## Country must be ready for possible failure of final status talks

NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN the Palestinians and Israel on the final status of the occupied territories are supposed to start at the beginning of the third year of self-government — i.e., on the second week of May 1996. The agenda for those negotiations includes several issues of extreme importance and sensitivity such as Jerusalem, borders, Israeli settlements and a Palestinian state.

The Palestinian side was practically tortured and bullied during the negotiations for a limited administrative self-rule. Israel is still stalling on simple issues such as the release of thousands of Palestinian prisoners still held in Israeli jails and the suspension of building new settlements. Therefore, observers do not need to wait 16 months more to realise that the negotiations on the final stage will be extremely difficult. Such negotiations may continue for three years, leading nowhere, especially when the policy of the so-called full partner, i.e., the United States of America, is to keep hands off and not to interfere despite the obvious disparity between the two parties.

It is not too early or premature to predict the failure of negotiations. There is no need to wait four years before we in Jordan start to prepare ourselves for this likely outcome, examine our options and make up our minds regarding our best course of action to safeguard our interests.

If negotiations fail, as we expect, and Israel blocks the establishment of a Palestinian independent state and refuses to withdraw its occupation forces and pull out its settlers from all the territories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip occupied since 1967, the possibilities should be one of the following three alternatives:

— the continuation of self-rule indefinitely or until further notice;

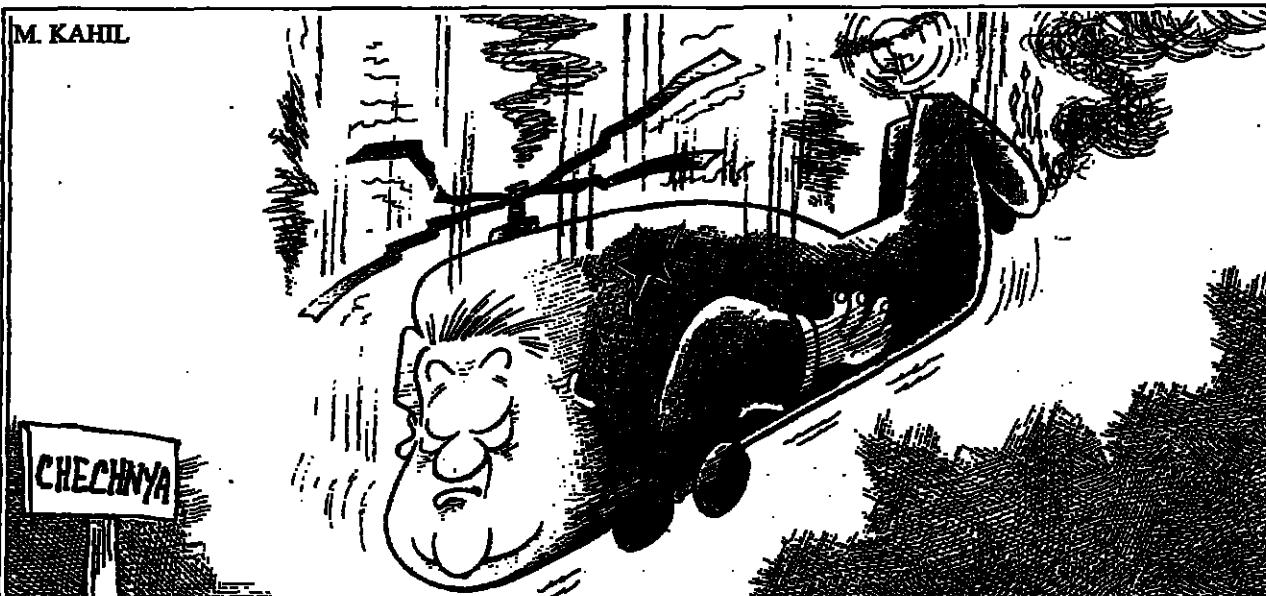
— the annexation of the occupied territories by Israel; or

All these alternatives are bad from the Jordanian people's point of view. The continued self-rule means the continued control of Israel of the West Bank and Gaza Strip for ever, while depriving its inhabitants from the Israeli nationality to maintain the purity of the Hebrew state. This means the annexation of land while treating the Palestinian population as guests that can be allowed to run their own day-to-day affairs until a way is found to get rid of them gradually through attrition. Jordan in that case will be the victim as a dumping place.

Since Israel will definitely refuse to absorb the Palestinian population, which could raise the ratio of Arabs in Israel to over 40 per cent thus resulting in a state with dual nationality. Since the civilised world will not accept the freezing of the situation for long, it is more likely that the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be connected, one way or another, to Jordan from the human point of view, while maintaining the sovereignty of Israel over the land, and keeping the Israeli army in all vital and sensitive areas and along the Jordan River in accordance with the Alose Plan. Israeli leaders will try to distinguish between sovereignty over land which they will claim is theirs, and the sovereignty over the people, which they will be glad to pass on to Jordan, just as they distinguished between religious supervision and political sovereignty over Jerusalem.

Now what should be the position of the Jordanian people on this possible scenario? Should Jordanians swallow this scheme which will be masked by such slogans as confederation, special relationship, one people and brotherhood etc. or what...?

M. KAHIL



## Where is the moral leader of the West?

By John J. Maresca

PARIS — What happens when the president of the United States advocates his role as the single most important voice of moral authority in the Western world? That is what has happened as Russian forces, under order from President Boris Yeltsin, have proceeded to bomb and shell the Chechens, in an apparent attempt to either force their submission or simply eliminate them.

President Bill Clinton has called the episode an "internal" Russian matter, and has expressed hope that the Russians will carry out their repression as quickly as possible. Meanwhile, the spokesman of the U.S. State Department has compared the attack on Chechnya with the American civil war, making the point that even in America a secession was prevented by force.

Is Mr. Clinton suggesting that the Russians should apply even greater force, so as to eliminate the Chechens more quickly than they already appear to be doing? If so, what will be left in Chechnya?

Is the State Department suggesting that the brutal 300-year Russian effort to conquer or eliminate the Chechens is somehow the same as the cause of main-

taining the American union amid political differences over the issue of slavery? That Boris Yeltsin is a sort of Abraham Lincoln? That 1860 is the same as 1995? All of this flies in the face of history, logic and the most elementary moral principles.

The fact is that the White House, and the president who resides there, have in our time acquired a central responsibility as the West's voice of moral authority, and President Clinton has abdicated this role in the way he has treated the Chechen crisis.

The Russians, and particularly President Yeltsin, are guilty of brutal repression of the Chechens, against all standards of human rights and numerous specific commitments under the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Helsinki accord, the Charter of Paris and many other agreements by which Russia is internationally bound.

Yet the American president will not say so. The Russians' actions in Grozny are deeply morally offensive even without their specific international undertakings, but Mr. Clinton stays silent and goes duck hunting.

There is something eerie about the fact that the international community has be-

come involved in Bosnia (without the United States, it is true) but has not touched the Chechen problem, despite the similarities between the two conflicts. The problem of Chechnya is no more "internal" than that of Bosnia, but the abdication of U.S. moral leadership has come into clearer focus.

Does the White House believe that its silence on this issue will reinforce Mr. Yeltsin's increasingly hollow regime, in which power sporadically shifts from one obscure individual to another, which has the support of only 15 per cent of the people, and which is slipping rapidly back toward the authoritarian methods (and officials) of the Soviet era?

The evil here comes from Boris Yeltsin himself, not from some "worse alternative." And the prospects are that with this kind of encouragement from the leader of the Western world, a desperate Yeltsin will move even further in the direction of the aggressive Russian nationalism that the West so rightly fears.

The countries of the European Union, to their credit, have made a demarche to the Russian foreign minister deploring the excessive use of force against the Chechens, and have

condemned, albeit hesitantly, the human rights violations of this Russian venture.

They have even proposed a halfhearted solution, namely the sending of CSCE monitors to Chechnya. This could be a worthwhile step if carried out immediately, because it might at least forestall the vicious Russian bombardment that has been targeting anything that moves, and would help the international community to bypass the contention that Chechnya is a purely internal Russian problem.

The United States should move quickly to support this European suggestion and to reassert its traditional leadership role on this deeply offensive moral issue. The Russians should be vigorously pressured to resolve the problem of Chechnya through negotiation, not of force. Mr. Yeltsin is not Lincoln, and this is not 1860.

The writer was U.S. ambassador to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe from 1989 to 1992. He was deputy U.S. negotiator of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and is author of a book, "To Helsinki," about those negotiations. This comment is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

## West fuels Muslim ire again over Chechnya

By Nicholas Doughty  
Reuters

LONDON — With its sluggish response to the crisis in Chechnya, the West is fuelling Islamic protests that it is ready to abandon Muslims to their fate unless its own vital interests are at stake, analysts and diplomats say.

Such accusations of double standards have been a long-running sore in the Middle East over the Palestinian issue and have come to the fore again in Bosnia, where Western governments have declined to support the Muslim-led government.

At a time when tensions and misunderstandings between the Islamic and traditionally Christian world are growing, Chechnya — part of a Muslim belt in the Caucasus — is widely seen as just another example of Western hypocrisy.

"Chechnya adds to the list... it creates a growing gap," said Maha Azzam, an expert on Islam with the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) in London.

"The resentment is strong and at many levels of society, including prosperous, well-to-do Muslims who would not support Islamic radicalism," she told Reuters.

"There is fertile ground for resentment," said Philip Robins of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA). "Chechnya helps to confirm the perception of double standards."

Although the United States and its allies came to the defence of Kuwait and drove out Iraqi forces in the 1991 Gulf war, many Muslims feel that this was only because of oil and other strategic interests in the region.

Western diplomats say they are aware of the problem but argue that their governments have little choice over Chechnya.

Faced with television pictures and graphic reports of the carnage in Grozny, Germany, France and Denmark have become more critical of Moscow's military onslaught in recent days.

But diplomats say there is little they can do in practice to resolve what they regard as an internal Russian affair.

"We don't want to destabilise (Russian President Boris) Yeltsin and there's not much we can do except offer humanitarian help," said one European diplomat.

"We don't win any bonus points in the Muslim World, I know, but I don't think the reaction would have been any different if the Chechens were Christians."

Helen Krag, an expert on minorities in the former

Soviet Union, said in a newspaper interview on Monday that Islam had always strengthened in Chechnya when its people felt threatened.

"But Islam is not particularly strong in everyday life, not at all," Mr. Krag told the International Herald Tribune. "I see no danger whatsoever from fundamentalism."

Nevertheless, footage beamed around the world of Chechen street fighters wearing green headbands and shouting "Allahu Akbar" (God is greatest) as their capital is bombed and shelled has provoked powerful reactions from the Islamic World outside.

Fifty-one states of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) called on Moscow to end the attacks and accused Russia on Sunday of breaking international law by "indiscriminate use of force against civilian centres."

On Friday, more than 2,000 Turks protesting against Russia's action clashed with police after Friday prayers at an Istanbul mosque.

"The Chechnya revolution is our revolution," protesters shouted, holding banners declaring Chechnya a Muslim land.

Pakistan has said it is deeply concerned at the bloodshed and Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani warned last week that the conflict would damage Russian ties with Muslim countries, fanning the flames of hatred and vengeance.

In Bangladesh on Monday, nearly one million Islamic believers from more than 70 countries ended a three-day congregation with prayer leaders calling for an end to attacks on Muslims in Chechnya and Bosnia.

The OIC urged the United Nations to help find a solution.

But Muslim countries, which too little influence in such organisations to shake up the crisis is put high on the agenda, despite the fact that some of them — including Pakistan and Bangladesh — have contributed to U.N. peacekeeping missions.

"There are no Muslim countries with a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council," said RUSI's Azzam.

Dr. Azzam said Islamic opposition groups, whether radical or not, would inevitably use what had happened in Chechnya to try to win more popular support in states from Algeria to Turkey.

"They will add this to the list that already has Bosnia and other examples," said Dr. Azzam. "In the end, it will backfire on western interests and give comfort to extremists."

## LETTERS

### Solar energy research worth support

To the Editor:

IMAGINE PLANET Earth as a depleted planet containing the remains of our industrial civilisation, and some cave-dwelling survivors.

Depleted planet here means no trees, no wild life, and radical weather changes. Nature as we know it has ended. This is the result of the continuous pollution we have generated through our relentless use of non-renewable sources of energy: e.g. coal, oil, gas, wood, nuclear energy. This might have been prevented by a world-wide effort to produce and research solar energy. Each day the sun delivers to Earth a supply of solar energy that will satisfy all our energy needs for 15 years. To date, we have failed to use this daily gift to our best advantage.

Have efforts to produce and research solar energy been stalled by government grants to utilities opposed to solar energy because of their heavy investment in non-renewable energy, the use of which pollutes our environment?

Why do not deserving independent corporations, which are free and eager to produce and research solar energy, receive any grants?

A world-wide effort to produce and research solar energy would provide our grandchildren with a decent environment in which to live.

Do not our grandchildren deserve a better environment than the aforementioned "depleted planet" that we are presently polluting for them?

Martin J. O'Malley,  
Passaic,  
New Jersey,  
U.S.A.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



## 'Saudis massing troops'

(Continued from page 1)

flag. A clash broke out with Yemeni border police, who recovered the post and ripped down the flag.

There was no official Saudi comment on the incident.

Earlier this month Yemen and Saudi Arabia agreed to halt military movements along their disputed border and pull their forces back from the area, following a series of clashes.

Tension has remained high between the two countries, whose relations deteriorated during the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis when Riyadh accused Sanaa of supporting Baghdad.

In Yemen's two-month civil war last year, Sanaa accused Riyadh of aiding southern Yemeni forces in their bid to break away from the north.

Yemen claims sovereignty over three Saudi provinces — Najran, Jazan and Assir — assigned to the kingdom under a treaty signed in 1934. Sanaa argues that the treaty expired in September 1992 and is opposed to renewing it.

The Yemeni Al Thawra weekly reported on Friday several people were killed or wounded in "wide-scale" clashes on Wednesday in which several Saudi troops

were captured. It said Saudi warplanes launched air raids on Yemeni positions.

There was no confirmation of the report by the weekly, the mouthpiece of the opposition Yemen Socialist Party (YSP).

Official Yemeni sources had said a number of Yemeni soldiers were injured in a clash on Tuesday with a Saudi force that penetrated Yemeni territory.

An official Yemeni source on Friday denied a report in the Lebanese Al Anwar paper saying that Sanaa had rushed troops to the border and that Yemeni forces held a Saudi post inside Saudi territory.

"There is no truth whatsoever in this report... there are no Yemeni troops massed on the border," he said.

Al Anwar said telephone contacts took place between King Fahd and a number of Arab leaders on Thursday and that Saudi ambassadors were briefed on the massing of Yemeni troops.

The official Saudi Press Agency said King Fahd talked on Thursday with President Assad and President Mubarak and discussed "political and security developments on the Arab and international arena."

## Chechens hold onto palace

(Continued from page 1)

of Russia, Mr. Clinton said "the violence must end."

"Each against all the parties to stop spilling blood and start making peace," he added.

Grozny has been subjected to air raids as well as relentless artillery bombardment, with Minutka Square, a rallying point for Chechen combatants in the south of the

city, hit by about a dozen bombs which killed at least three people and injured five more on Saturday, photographer on the scene said.

But victory was still not in sight for the Russians, more than a month after they were sent to put down the three-year-old rebellion in the secessionist republic.

## Jerusalem should not cause disunity

(Continued from page 1)

over this issue since the Kingdom has no ambitions or objectives other than protection of the Arab and Islamic identity of the Holy City," he added.

"Participation in the OIC (Jerusalem Committee's) meeting manifests Jordan's determination to present its position with regard to the status of the Holy City," Mr. Mbeideen said.

Stressing that Jordan seeks to safeguard the holy shrines, Mr. Mbeideen recalled that Jordan had been acting as guardian of these places over the past five decades and undertook many measures, including the restoration of

the Dome of the Rock Mosque, in order to achieve that goal.

The Jerusalem Committee will give attention to efforts being made at all levels to ensure Arab sovereignty over Arab Jerusalem, to protect its Islamic character and to secure the rights of all followers of the monotheistic religions, Mr. Mbeideen said.

The Jerusalem Committee, which was formed by OIC in 1975, has been entrusted with implementing resolutions passed by OIC and other international organisations which support OIC's stand, Mr. Mbeideen noted.

## Movement takes shape

(Continued from page 1)

lements has also boosted efforts to organise Palestinian ranks.

Dr. Abdul Shafi's call coincided with parallel, albeit uncoordinated, efforts to revive the PLO.

The new initiative to revive the PLO is led by Palestinian Foreign Minister Farouk Kaddoumi, who met with Palestinian opposition groups in Damascus last week.

Mr. Kaddoumi, a member of the Fatah Central Committee, even met with Khaled Al Fakhour, leader of the National Salvation Front, and Ahmad Jibril of the Liberation of Palestine General Command (PFLP-GC), who were accused in the past of attempting to create an alternative organisation to the PLO.

According to sources from the opposition Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Mr. Kaddoumi has pledged to join in the call for the suspending the peace talks.

But other Palestinian sources are not optimistic about the success of these efforts, especially that most of the PLO leadership institutions have been defunct since PLO leader Yasser Arafat moved to the Gaza Strip last July.

Following are excerpts from Dr. Abdul Shafi's draft proposal:

"...A movement for building democracy is needed... to practise its role initially among the people in the occupied territories.

"The movement's political identity is based on the following:

— Commitment to the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on Palestinian land and the attainment of the Palestinian 'welfare' rights in accordance with United

Nations resolutions.

— The movement reiterates the unity of the Palestinian people and that the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the symbol of their unity.

— The movement considers the continuation of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands — the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank including East Jerusalem — and settlement construction as a blatant aggression condemned by the United Nations Security Council resolutions. They are serious obstacles to peace in the region.

— The movement is committed to the peace initiative launched by the Palestine National Council (PNC) in Algiers, on Nov. 15, 1988, and to Palestinian refugees' rights according to United Nations Resolution 194.

— The movement rejects any Israeli territorial claims in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, and considers the construction and settlement of Israelis in that area illegal and in total contravention of the requirements of peace.

— The movement considers the continuation of Israeli claims as a flagrant call for violence and a distortion of the concept of peace. The movement holds Israel responsible for the violence that results as a consequence of the Israeli policies — whether it is Palestinian or Israeli violence.

— On the basis of the commitments mentioned above the Movement for Democracy is open for all individuals who believe and adhere to democracy and work to disseminate democratic values and practices in the Palestinian society. The movement is not ready to compromise its independent identity.



Palestinian youths clash with an Israeli military police unit after the Friday noon prayer as they were prevented from holding a demonstration in the Arab village of El Khader against the widening of the settlement of Ephrat (AFP photo)

## Self-rule deal could die of irrelevance

With continuing violence and stalemate over Jewish settlements, Rabin may have run out of ideas, Derek Brown in Jerusalem writes

IT HAS been a dreadful week for the Israeli government and for the peace accord with the Palestinians. Eleven lives have been taken, and trust between the so-called peace partners is as low as it has been — possibly as low as it can get without the whole process disintegrating.

The gloom is not just the product of a particularly grim week, but of the accumulated disillusion on both sides with an arrangement which has promised much and delivered dangerously little.

Some of the Palestinians have freedom of a sort, but it is the freedom of the ghetto. Within the self-rule enclaves of Jericho and the Gaza Strip, their borders guarded by Israeli troops, poverty is increasing. In the rest of the West Bank, still under military occupation, there is burning resentment about the remorseless expansion of Jewish settlements.

From the other side of the 1967 border, the view is not better. Rightwing Israelis were appalled by the very idea of peace with Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Even liberals were apprehensive. Now everyone is sated with the almost daily reports of death. More than 100 Israelis have been killed since the signing

of the "historic" peace accord in September 1993, the bloodiest toll by far since the start of the Arab intifada, or uprising, in late 1987.

Last week's dead, 10 Palestinians and one Israeli, sustain the ratio of the intifada. But over recent months it has been much more balanced. That fact is chilling in a country obsessed by threat and survival.

Over the past 15 months of "peace", Islamist groups like Hamas and others opposed to the accord have hit civilian and security force targets more efficiently than ever before. Now even Mr. Arafat's raggedy police force seems to be joining in.

Last week's corpses include three Palestinian policemen, killed by Israeli troops at Beit Hanoun inside the northern border of the autonomous Gaza Strip. The army says categorically that the police fired first; the Palestinians insist that they did not fire at all.

As ever, what is believed is much more important than what can be proved. The conventional wisdom in Gaza today is that Israel deliberately launched a lethal attack to divert attention from its own obstruction of the peace process.

For an increasing number of Israelis, the affray at Beit

Hanoun is evidence of the essential untrustworthiness of Mr. Arafat and the PLO. Instead of neutralising the militant threat, the argument runs, self-rule has dramatically increased it.

There have been signs for some time that the government and security forces are losing patience with the Palestinians' failure to deliver on security. Last autumn, in the wake of the Islamist suicide bombing of a bus in Tel Aviv, which claimed more than 20 Israeli lives, the gloves came off. At least one Islamist activist was assassinated in Gaza, and undercover operations were stepped up.

Last week brought dramatic evidence of the new, no-nonsense approach. On Monday, hours before the Beit Hanoun shooting, troops intercepted and shot dead three Hamas militants in two separate incidents in the West Bank. Four activists of the Popular Front were cornered in Ramallah also and, as the military analysts say, "eliminated".

There should be nothing inevitable about the response, but there always is a response. Recently, a woman settler died when her car was attacked by gunmen near Ramallah. Her brother-in-law was wounded. Two small girls

were in the vehicle. Neither was hurt.

The latest attack has brutally underlined the government's dilemma over Jewish colonisation of the West Bank, an issue which has suddenly jumped to the top of the "peace" agenda after months of muted Palestinian grumbling and casual Israeli reassurances.

The government is adamant that settlements can be discussed only when the time comes to negotiate a final-status agreement. In the meantime, it says, there will be no new public sector building, and no new settlements.

The reality is that settlements are growing. Jews are moving into the West Bank, land is being confiscated, and new roads are being constructed. All of this has gone on behind a smokescreen of legalistic guff about "state" land, private sector activity, security permits, and so on. What matters are facts on the ground, and those facts are humiliating for West Bank Palestinians.

After a recent violent clash on the site of yet another settlement expansion near Bethlehem, and the government's subsequent attempt at "compromise" (the site was moved and building is going ahead), Palestinians and

settlers are talking themselves into a potentially ugly new confrontation.

Demonstrations, backed by peace groups and sections of the Israeli left, were planned at several building sites. In response, the more militant settlers are talking of taking defence into their own hands, and bitterly accusing the government of giving in to violence.

(Nothing about this is comic, but there have been surreal moments. Such as Eliakim Ha'etzi, one of the shriller settlers from the ultra-right community of Kiryat Arba, complaining about Palestinians "grabbing our land".)

Against this background of confrontation, it is perhaps unsurprising that there has been little progress on the next scheduled phase of the peace process: pulling Israeli troops out of Arab areas and extending self-rule into the occupied West Bank as a prelude to Palestinian elections. But therein lies the greatest danger of all, that without forward momentum the accord will atrophy and die of sheer irrelevance.

"We have moved from the siege of Beirut to the siege of Gaza," said the Palestinian National Authority spokesman, Nabil Abu Radda, last week. "We expected Israel to redeploy its troops; instead it

has redeployed its settlers."

Mr. Radda belongs to the vast majority of Palestinians who reject a plot, or several concurrent plots, in which life happened in the past half-year of political stalemate and deteriorating security.

Much more plausible, however, is the growing view that the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, has simply run out of options, perhaps even of ideas. Politically, his survival and that of his Labour Party depend on the success of the peace process. But equally, he stands or falls on the be-all and end-all issue: security.

Any concession to the Palestinians, for example on the release of the 5,000 or more prisoners still in Israeli jails, will be interpreted by the right as weakness, and an incitement to more violence. But if he offers nothing to the PLO and instead appeases the right with harsher security, Mr. Arafat could lose his already crumbling popular base.

In a system dominated by news bulletins — what in Northern Ireland used to be called the politics of the latest atrocity — it seems an age since Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat stood side by side in Stockholm to receive the Nobel peace prize.

The Guardian

## Pakistan's mighty Khan

LAHORE — HE is mobbed wherever he goes. People want to touch him. Schoolchildren happily line up to give him their pocket money, women fling their jewellery at him, small traders and businessmen have raised billions of rupees for his cause. His rallies get bigger and more stirring by the day. Rousing slogans proclaim him as the next prime minister of Pakistan.

He is Imran Khan, a former captain of Pakistan's cricket team, who shot to glory after Pakistan won cricket's World Cup in 1992. These days Mr. Khan is raising money for a cancer hospital for the poor in memory of his mother, who died of the disease. More worryingly for Pakistan's political leaders, the prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, and the opposition's Nawaz Sharif, he has become a

popular icon.

Until recently, the Oxford-educated Mr. Khan wore Armani suits, dated London socialites and rubbed shoulders with royalty and rock stars. Now he has turned his back on all that. Clad in traditional Pakistani shalwar kameez, he claims the West is immoral, depraved, hypocritical and imperialistic. He accuses Pakistani ruling elites of being heartless and corrupt. There is talk of forming a welfare party or pressure group to address the plight of the "wretched of the earth".

To Pakistanis the new Imran Khan is noble (he comes from a noble line of Pathans), truthful (he admitted that he had once "tampered" with the ball in a county cricket match), selfless (cancer hospital for the poor), independent (he is critical of all politicians

and parties) and homespun (he refuses to wear Western clothes and frowns on Western music). He scolds upper class children for aspiring to become "brown snakes". He insists that his hospital will not become dependent on handouts from the rich or the powerful. His populist rhetoric evokes standing ovations across the country.

Mr. Khan's stardom springs partly from people's discontent with Pakistan's corrupt political leadership. It also reflects strong undercurrents of anti-Western feeling among many sections of state and society. How has this come about?

Since Pakistan reverted to democracy in 1988, the country has been plagued by recurring constitutional crises, bitter palace intrigues and acute political instability. Five governments

have come and gone, three elections have taken place. Every regime, at national and state level, has faced charges of corruption, embezzlement and plunder. The same landed elites which propped up military regimes in the past now hog the power under democracy.

Benazir Bhutto has turned out to be a disappointment. Jobs are harder to find, inflation is soaring (over 20 per cent unofficially), law and order has rapidly deteriorated and sectarianism (financed by Saudi Arabia and Iran) is rife. Ethnic conflict has paralysed the country's largest industrial city, Karachi, where more than 800 people (including 70 policemen) were killed by terrorists in 1994.

The economy is slack. For the third year running,

growth is expected to be lower than the 6 per cent average for the 1980s. Many industries, including cotton (the country's top foreign-exchange earner) and sugar, are in bad shape. Since March, the Karachi Stock Exchange index has declined 727 points to 1936 points in December.

The country is steadily drifting into a pro-Islam, anti-West mood. Pakistanis felt betrayed when the United States, a staunch ally for over four decades, cut off economic and military aid in 1990 in retaliation for Pakistan's refusal to abandon its nuclear programme. Lack of Western support for the cause of Muslims in Kashmir and Bosnia is seen as part of the West's "new crusade against Islam".

In this atmosphere of despair and drift many people find themselves yearning for a saviour to provide

security, stability and self-respect. Can the born-again Muslim Imran Khan take on this role? For the moment, Mr. Khan is insisting that he is not interested in politics because he finds it "contemptible". But he admits that General Hamid Gul is his mentor and made a momin (the rightly guided).

General Gul was head of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence agency when the Afghan war was at its peak. He is an aggressive self-proclaimed "Islamic visionary" who has been touring the country exhorting people to demand the liberation of Kashmir by force from India. The danger to Pakistan is that the "mighty Khan" (as he is fondly called) might become a pawn in the hands of such demagogues.

The Economist



## Islamic countries threatened by food shortage by 2000

TEHRAN (AFP) — Muslim countries could have serious trouble feeding their people in the next century, the head of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) warned here Saturday.

"Despite many efforts, OIC member states have achieved no tangible progress in the area of food security," Hamid Al Ghabid told agriculture ministers and representatives from 48 Islamic countries.

"The main reason is the lack of any effective mechanism at the regional and sub-regional levels," Mr. Ghabid said at the seminar on food security and agricultural development which opened here Saturday.

Providing food for the world's one billion Muslims "will be seriously threatened on the horizon of the year 2000 if collective measures are not taken urgently in the field of agricultural development," Mr. Ghabid said.

He said tackling food shortage in Islamic countries was a "priority" for the OIC and called on international organisations to help out.

He also called attention to the problems of "famine and malnutrition in the developing and underdeveloped" countries.

"Most developing countries and especially the underdeveloped ones face excessive debts and a constant fall in the price of their agricultural exports," he said.

Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani warned in an opening speech

that most OIC member states were dependent on imported food and the situation "could turn into a political problem."

"Agricultural production and trade are becoming more and more dependent on political considerations," he said without elaborating.

The president urged OIC members to set up a "healthy economic and agricultural structure" and engage further in a South-South cooperation through establishing an Islamic common market.

Mr. Rafsanjani said Iran had made considerable advances in agriculture, producing 10.8 million tonnes of wheat in 1993 compared with 7.2 million tonnes in 1988, when he became president.

Wheat production is expected to reach 11.5 million tonnes this year, while domestic consumption exceeds 13 million tonnes.

Ministers from Gambia, Syria and Malaysia — who represent Muslim countries from Africa, the Middle East and Asia — also called for a "joint OIC effort to respond to the increasing need" for food in the Islamic world.

Syrian Agriculture Minister Assad Mustafa warned that the "weakness" of Arab countries in the agricultural sector could lead to a strong Israel influence in the region.

Malaysian Minister Sanusi Junid for his part called for a "common agricultural order."

Participants at the three-day seminar are to discuss various suggestions to improve the food situation.

## Arab Gulf states ponder creation of trade bank

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states are considering the creation of a bank to finance their trade as part of attempts to boost non-oil exports and diversify their economies, according to an official study.

The Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consulting (GOIC) has completed a feasibility study on the project, to be funded by the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, according to the study by the Doha-based group.

"The export-import bank is now under serious consid-

eration as it will help member states in expanding their trade," said the study, obtained Friday.

It did not mention the proposed capital of the bank, the latest in a series of projects designed to support flagging inter-GCC trade and enable member states to increase export to manufactured products.

It also did not make clear if the bank would cover exports of petrochemicals and other oil products as most GCC nations have embarked on projects to expand such industries to face growing de-

mand following the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) deal.

A similar project covering all Arab countries was proposed at an Arab League-sponsored conference held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) this week to discuss economic challenges in face of world blocs.

Trade among the League's 22 members has remained at less than 10 per cent of their total trade of more than \$200 billion a year due to political rifts, customs barriers, funds shortages and communication and storage problems.

In the GCC, internal trade has ranged at seven to 12 per cent of the group's total trade of more than \$190 billion a year although their 1982 economic pact calls for free movement of goods and individuals.

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the UAE — have sought to reduce reliance on volatile crude earnings through increasing non-oil exports and setting up chemical and other industries.

GOIC, which oversees industrial policies in the GCC, said it had proposed 17 new

industrial projects in Saudi Arabia in 1994 and 14 ventures in Kuwait.

It will promote 10 projects in Bahrain in the next three months and will hold seminars in Qatar and the UAE this year to present new industrial ventures, mainly for the private sector, it said.

"A decade ago, the concentration was on the public sector. But now, there is an emphasis on small and medium-sized enterprises for the private sector as part of economic reforms in the region," it said.

## Dollar musters rise on mark but fails to crack yen

LONDON (R) — The dollar managed a rise of about a third of a penny against the mark on foreign exchanges Friday but was undermined by a resilient yen and weakened further by a surprise drop in U.S. December retail sales.

The dollar finished the European trading session at 1.5350 marks and 98.60 yen versus Thursday's late European levels of 1.5295 and 99.05.

"The dollar is still looking shaky and the retail sales figures have added to the gloom," said Stuart Parkinson, an economist at German-owned investment bank Morgan Grenfell here.

"And it's difficult to see the yen weaken again in the near term."

In a stormy week in global currency markets the dollar lost almost two and a half pence against the mark. Against the yen, it was more than one and a half yen lower than last Friday.

Its shy advance against the mark was scuppered by a surprise drop in U.S. retail sales of 0.1 per cent in December against forecasts of a 0.7 per cent rise. November's figure was revised down to a 0.2 per cent rise from 1.2 per cent previously.

The soft data put a further lid on interest-rate rise speculation, and analysts said they may scale down their fourth-quarter U.S. economic growth estimates.

Most still believe the Federal Reserve will tighten credit conditions at the end of the month, but most likely by just 50 basis points, less aggressively than previously thought.

In dollar/yen trading, the 98.50 level was pivotal, providing the U.S. unit with a tough barrier to chew on. The dollar sliced through it several times, but bidding by Japanese institutional investors and importers checked declines.

The yen has become an Asian safe-haven amid global market jitters, prompted initially by Mexico's financial crisis but spilling over into emerging markets in the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia,

Indonesia, and parts of eastern Europe.

The dollar got some respite from profit-taking on long mark positions. Concern about political and fiscal problems in Spain, Italy and Sweden had triggered a flight into the perceived safe-haven of mark-denominated investments earlier in the week, dragging the lira and peseta to fresh record lows.

The lira firmed in expectation of Treasury Minister Lamberto Dini being appointed prime minister-designate with the task of forming Italy's 54th government since World War II. President Scalfaro announced the appointment late in European trading.

## Peseta still weak Spain announces spending cut, structural reform

MADRID (R) — Spain Friday announced deficit-cutting measures and long-awaited structural reforms, with an eye on shoring up sagging confidence in a peseta that received its biggest battering for two years this week.

Announcing a 150 billion peseta (\$1.2 billion) cut in government spending this year, Economy Minister Pedro Solbes said, "we have observed a great deal of concern in the financial markets over fiscal policy in 1995."

He also announced monthly controls on ministerial spending to ensure no deviation from budget deficit targets, as well as structural economic reforms freeing up land for development and introducing greater flexibility in private pensions.

The peseta, which had been extremely volatile during the day with rumours flying on early elections, reacted calmly and closed in Madrid at 87.15/25, just above its opening levels.

Analysts had said that in the present crisis the government at the very least needed to make a show of firmness on the deficit and demon-

strate its determination on

elections to resolve what it sees as a political impasse.

Analysts said while the political crisis continues over allegations of government involvement in a secret war on Basque separatists the peseta would remain under pressure even with renewed government vigour on the deficit.

But Mr. Solbes said the peseta was "clearly undervalued" at present levels and saw it pulling back to levels around 85.

The measures, brought forward to Friday's cabinet meeting, had been widely expected and analysts said that the 150 billion peseta spending cut would probably achieve little more than offset the impact on debt servicing of rising interest rates.

Mr. Solbes said the government is still optimistic of reaching a 3.5 per cent inflation target this year, after recording the lowest rise in 25 years with last year's 4.3 per cent increased also announced Friday.

## Iranian oil industry to be partly privatised

NICOSIA (R) — Iran plans to privatise some parts of its oil and petrochemical industry, an oil ministry official was on Saturday quoted as saying.

Iranian television quoted the ministry's director general of planning, Kazem Vaziri-Hamaneh, as saying sectors of the oil and petrochemical industry not barred from privatisation by Iran's constitution would be handed over to the private sector.

He did not specify what sectors of the oil industry are barred from privatisation.

"Those sectors prohibited from privatisation would be run as autonomous government agencies. Raw materials would be sold to them and finished products purchased from them at international prices," he was quoted as saying by the television, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

"The necessary subsidies, he said, would be paid by the oil ministry and the government," the television said. "Refineries could be run in the same way," the official was quoted as saying.

## Foreign investors pay \$4.2b in taxes in China

BEIJING (R) — China expects to collect more than 36 billion yuan (\$4.2 billion) in taxes from foreign investment in 1994, about eight per cent of total industrial and commercial tax revenue, the China Daily said Friday.

In 1993, China earned 20.6 billion yuan (\$2.42 billion) from taxing foreign investment, seven per cent of the industrial and commercial bill, the newspaper quoted a senior official of the State Administration of Taxation as saying.

"Foreign tax income is expected to witness a fairly big growth in 1994 to make up around eight per cent of China's total industrial and tax revenue," the newspaper said.

China collected 451.3 billion yuan (\$53.09 billion) in industrial and commercial taxes in 1994, it said.

"Foreign investment tax has become an important component of the state coffers," the China Daily quoted the unnamed official as saying at a recent conference on foreign taxation in Beijing.

At the start of last year, China reformed its tax law to put Chinese and foreign-funded enterprises on a par.

China said foreign-funded enterprises that paid higher bills under the new law would be compensated.

So far China has paid 2.5 billion yuan (\$294 million) in refunds, the official said.

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 1995

By Thomas S. Plerson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

**GENERAL TENDENCIES:** Use your finest talent in the most intelligent way today and it will pay off handsomely at the right time later on. Tonight you can make those needed changes at home and make solid plans for the work-week ahead which is going to be busy.

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) The morning is ideal to finish arrangements made with partners, and tonight you find there is keeping promises made.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Know what it is a dynamic partner, wants of you and handle the matter well. Later, assist your mate with a problem.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Schedule your duties wisely in the morning and don't fret if a friend is a little delayed in meeting you, show your patience.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) Be sure to use tact at home in the morning and find better ways of enjoying yourself. Steer clear of extravagance.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Studying proven "tips in the morning can be beneficial to you. One who is restless, could make an unpleasant remark, but ignore it.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Try to cut down on expenses in the morning, and then handle correspondence and other daily activities. Communicate with friends.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Morning is fine for self improvement, later handle whatever is practical in a wise way. Solve that problem you have with a close friend.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Forget that private anxiety in the morning and then you can handle outside affairs well. Be kind at home to your loved ones.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Be sure you study your personal desires well and then know how to gain them with real wisdom. Be happy with those close to you.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Plan how to make a better impression on others and then pursue your fondest wishes and gifts them so you can be more successful in life.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) Maintain the philosophy you profess in the morning. You find more respect in the outside world. Show that you are loyal towards others.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) This is an ideal morning for getting new ideas, but later you find it hard to go after some goal which appeals to you. Perseverance wins out.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

## THE Daily Crossword by William Canine

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41 Down	42 Across	43 Down	44 Across	45 Down	46 Across	47 Down	48 Across	49 Down	50 Across
51 Down	52 Across	53 Down	54 Across	55 Down	56 Across	57 Down	58 Across	59 Down	60 Across
61 Down	62 Across	63 Down	64 Across	65 Down	66 Across	67 Down	68 Across	69 Down	70 Across
71 Down	72 Across	73 Down	74 Across	75 Down	76 Across	77 Down	78 Across	79 Down	80 Across
81 Down	82 Across	83 Down	84 Across	85 Down	86 Across	87 Down	88 Across	89 Down	90 Across
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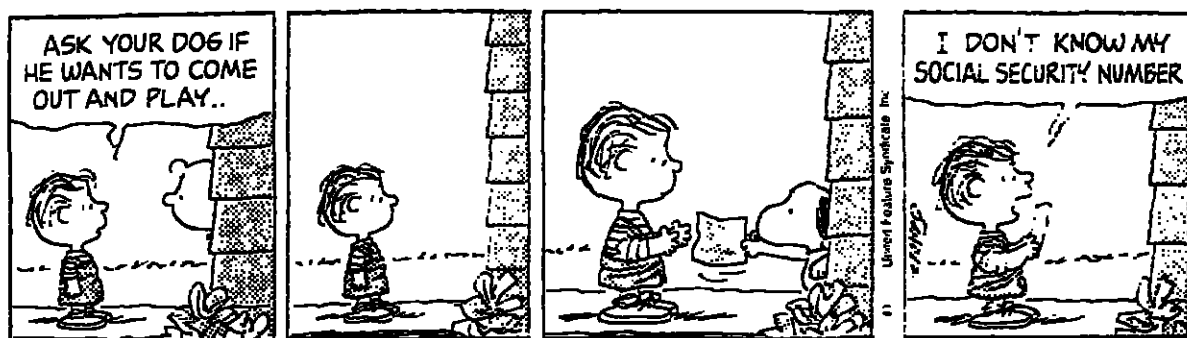
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## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



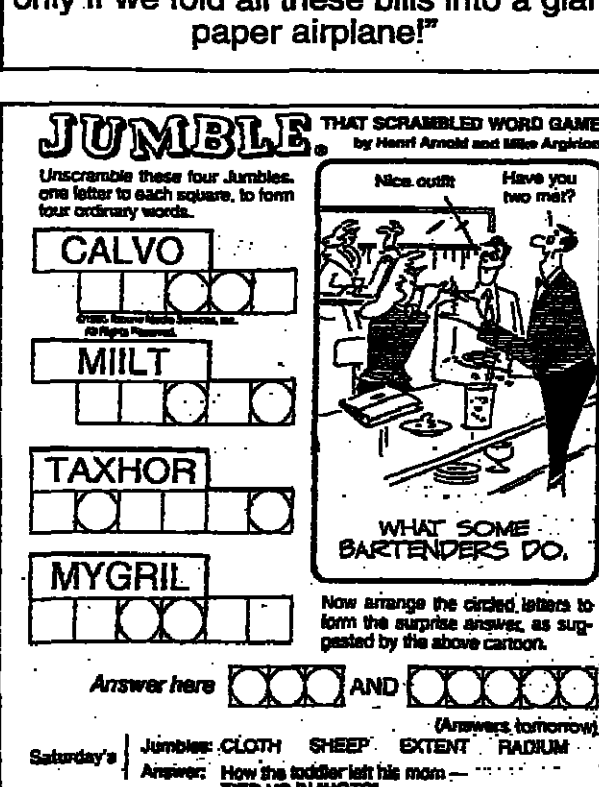
## Mutt'n'Jeff



## THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



## JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME





# business daily beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

## Interest rates rising

★ The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) issued JD 25 million of certificates of deposit (CDs) earning higher interest than those issued previously. Certificates of deposits maturing in the three months now earn 8.25 per cent interest after having been at 7.7 per cent. Interest on CDs maturing in six months went up from eight per cent to 8.5 per cent while interest on repurchase agreements of CDs and treasury bills became nine per cent instead of 8.5 per cent. According to banking sources, the hike is to ensure the stability of the Jordanian dinar and to discourage any shift towards other currencies, especially the U.S. dollar, the interest on which had been rising recently. A banker pointed out that, based on the higher interest rates on CDs, the people will be looking for a 9.25 interest on their deposits, especially at banks that try to raise their liquidity levels. On the credit side, it is more likely that banks will be charging more on their loans and other credit facilities with interest as high as 13 or 14 per cent plus one per cent commission (Al Aswaq).

★ Nine hundred million eggs were produced in Jordan last year, 50 million more than 1993. Exports in 1994 were 150 million (Al Dustour).

★ Royal Jordanian flew 13,726 hours last year compared to 13,363 hours in 1993. The airline is expected to post more than 16,739 flight hours this year (Al Rai).

★ Israeli tourists increased the operations at JETT (Jordan Express Tourist Transport Co.) by 25 per cent since the signing of the peace treaty. JETT is considering raising its operational capacity by 30 per cent through purchasing new buses and upgrading the performance of old buses (Al Aswaq).

★ Bank of Jordan Tuesday reported sharply improved results for 1994, with six million dinars (\$8.57 million) in pre-tax profits due to growth in lending and operations in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Pre-tax profits were 3.50 million dinars (\$5 million) in 1993. "The healthy 1994 results are due to new industrial loans and the resumption of operations in the occupied West Bank which raised our total balance sheet," Tawfik Fakhouri, chairman of the Bank of Jordan, told Reuters. Final figures and any dividend distributions are under study by the central bank for approval and need to be endorsed at the bank's annual meeting in April. The Bank of Jordan, which plans a major West Bank presence in 1995, in 1994 opened three branches in the Israeli-occupied West Bank towns of Ramallah, Nablus and Jenin. This month it will open a fourth West Bank branch in Hebron and its first branch in the self-rule Gaza area. Mr. Fakhouri said West Bank deposits topped \$90 million at end of 1994. It was the first Jordanian bank to reopen in the territories under the Middle East peace process, opening in Ramallah last April. Total assets rose to 405,190,000 dinars (\$578,842,857) in 1994 from 298,211,000 dinars (\$426,015,714) in 1993. Operating income rose to 11,956,000 dinars (\$17,080,000) from 8,957,000 dinars (\$12,795,714) in 1993. Loans rose to 186,005,000 dinars (\$265,721,428) from 138,828,000 dinars (\$198,325,714) in 1993. Shareholders equity fell to 21.6 million dinars (\$30.8 million) from 21.7 million dinars (\$31 million) in 1993. Total deposits rose to 324,616,000 dinars (\$463,737,142) from 225,601,000 dinars (\$322,287,140) in 1993. Total balance sheet rose to 458,412,000 dinars (\$654,874,280) from 342,663,000 dinars (\$489,518,571) in 1993 (Al Rai).

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan, which is seeking export-led economic growth, has a strong manufacturing base but lacks proper technology and marketing technique: joint ventures with foreign partners could offer the best means for Jordanian exporters to develop their business, a leading businessman said Tuesday.

Fawaz Shalaan, vice-president of the Jordan Trade Association (JTA), also said Jordanian producers should adopt a carefully planned approach to exports rather than "haphazard, occasional exports" which do more harm than benefit.

Mr. Shalaan was addressing a workshop on "Jordan's exports" as part of a seminar entitled "Jordan and the World," organised by Economic Perspectives, a local newsletter.

The two-day seminar, which ended Tuesday, reviewed issues such as "Jordan's economic relations with Europe," "Jordan and technology transfer," "Foreign investment in Jordan," "New environmental factors in Jordan's regional and international economic relations," and "International issues affecting Jordan in relation to problems of copyright."

According to Mr. Shalaan, Jordan has a strong manufacturing base by virtue of an edge in cheap labour when compared to most other countries in the region.

## Joint ventures suit Jordan industries best

But many of the Kingdom's exporters do not have the right technology and the proper marketing approach to make a success of exports, he said.

In many cases, export orders came to Jordan as a result of the importer taking an interest in the product through personal mediation rather than local companies going after export orders, he said.

The figures that Mr. Shalaan cited to support his argument included:

— More than 50 per cent of Jordan's exports are raw material: the bulk of the rest is consumer products: there is very little export of capital goods.

— Five of Jordan's 14 industrial sectors account for 75 per cent of Jordan's exports.

— (10) companies account for 75 per cent of Jordan's exports while (70) companies make up 25 per cent.

— Five markets account

for 80 per cent of the Kingdom's total exports, and 60 markets make up 20 per cent.

— Nine groups of products make up 65 per cent of exports while 330 other groups of products make up the rest.

"This uneven distribution is a result of an unplanned, haphazard way of doing business," Mr. Shalaan said. "We are weak in technology and in marketing."

As such, "we often have the unfortunate experience of bad exports," he said.

Mr. Shalaan said there was a gradual shift in Jordanian exports from traditional exports such as vegetables and raw materials to non-traditional items such as paper and plastic items, chemicals, medicine and pharmaceuticals. But, he said, the speed of the change was very slow.

He welcomed the moves adopted by the government to encourage exports, including tax exemption for all income from exports and the setting up of a unit at the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) to offer low-cost financing for exports. The interest levied by the CBJ is

around four per cent.

Until recently, commercial banks also used to extend similar facilities at a cost slightly higher than the CBJ. But, bankers attending the workshop said they were no longer able to extend such facilities since their own cost of financing was much higher than what the export community would accept from the banking system.

"Our cost is nearly 10.5 per cent," said a representative of the British Bank of the Middle East, adding that overnight bank-to-bank interest rates had also gone up.

Mr. Shalaan conceded that the private sector had a major role to play in the economic growth of the country, but lamented that the sector was relegated to a junior role by the public sector.

"It is sad to see that 55 per cent of the workforce is employed by the public sector, which also interferes with every activity of the private sector," he said, citing the government's investments in the hotel and tourism industry and transport, and monopoly in telecommunications.

However, Mr. Shalaan opposed the idea of setting up a regulatory body with government involvement to ensure that goods being exported meet with certain minimum requirements in terms of contents, quality and presentation.

"We already have enough of government controls," he said. However, in the context of quality of exports, he said, Jordanian exporters would be better off if they could have an international body such as the ISO 9000 set up presence in Jordan to give exported goods its stamp of approval.

tions, and the role of the ministry of supply, which regulates market prices.

In quality control, Mr. Shalaan decried that Jordanian companies do not have a separate line of "export quality" production as is the case in many third world countries. "We are exporting the same items in the same packing and presentation as we market them locally," he said, adding that some of the features of the local production may not be suitable for export market.

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### Financial Markets

Jordan Times  
in co-operation with  
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close 14/2/95	Tokyo Close 14/2/95
Sterling Pound	1.5631	1.5542**
Deutsche Mark	1.5210	1.5206**
Swiss Franc	1.2853	1.2853
French Franc	5.8700	5.8699**
Japanese Yen	98.72	98.75
European Currency Unit	1.2403	1.2400**

\* USD Per STG  
\*\* European Opening to 8:00 a.m. GMT

Interbank Bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

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Interbank



## Berasategui buries one-surface reputation

MILAN (AFP) — Alberto Berasategui, the French Open finalist, buried his reputation as a strictly one-surface player here Monday when he beat American David Wheaton 7-6 (14/12), 3-6, 6-4 to reach the second round of the men's indoor tournament.

The third-seeded Spaniard, who started the 1995 season late after joining his clay-loving compatriots in skipping the Australian Open in January, reached the second round on outdoor hardcourt last week in Dubai before losing to German Carsten Arriens.

Wheaton, a hardcourt specialist ranked 34th in the world, proved a handful for the Spaniard ranked fourth, but after a poor second set Berasategui pulled through to book a second round match against Slava Dosedel of the Czech Republic, who beat Alberto Costa of Spain 6-4, 7-5.

France's Guy Forget continued his slow but steady comeback from serious knee problems, beating Spain's Francisco Clavet 6-4, 7-5.

He was angry with organizers for their refusal to delay his entry into the tournament until Tuesday.

Forget was a guest at the Saturday wedding of his Davis Cup captain Yannick Noah in Normandy to English model Heather Stewart-Whyte, but he had to leave the festivities early to get to Milan.

"I was not happy," he said. "It really annoyed me."

The unseeded Frenchman took his frustrations out on the court, needing one hour 33 minutes to carve out the win.

The Swiss-based 30-year-old who has reached the second round of all three events he has played so far this year needed only the first of two match points against clay-court specialist Clavet.

World number three Boris Becker, who won his first title this year in Marseille on Sunday, is top seed ahead of Goran Ivanisevic, the world number four from Croatia, who was second in the rankings to Pete Sampras late last year.



Spaniard Alberto Berasategui

Earlier, qualifier Ronald Agnir of Haiti defeated Fabrice Santoro of France 6-1, 7-6 (7-5) while Slava Dosedel of the Czech Republic ousted another Spaniard, Alberto Costa 6-4, 7-5.

### 'Don't write Steffi off' warns Pierce

World number three Mary Pierce, hoping to win her first-ever tournament in her adopted France at the Paris Indoor Open this week, warned that nobody should write off former world number one Steffi Graf.

Graf, who is in the French capital to play her first tournament in three months, revealed on Monday that she would be carrying a severe back injury for the rest of her career.

But the Canadian-born Pierce, who was 20 last month when she won the Australian Open, revealed that she had trained with Graf on Monday and found the German to be in "excellent shape."

"I had the impression she was as fast as ever," said Pierce who is seeded to play Graf in next Sunday's final of the \$420,000 WTA event.

"I thought she looked really sharp out there."

Pierce, who is being heralded as a player capable of wrestling the world number one crown from Arantza Sanchez and Graf, said: "It's always been my dream to be number one in the world but it certainly won't be easy. It's been hard enough reaching third place in the rankings. But obviously I shall be doing my best."

Pierce, beaten in the final at the French Open at Roland Garros last year by Sanchez, admitted she had learned a lot of lessons since then.

"I wanted to do well — especially in France. But that put extra pressure on me. When I faced Arantza again in the final at the Australian Open it was very different. I went out on court feeling much more confidence. I had nothing to

lose.

"Obviously anything can happen in a tournament and there is no such thing as an easy draw. But I would dearly love to play Steffi in the final here."

Pierce has become something of a jinx for Graf. She beat the German in the semi-finals at Roland Garros and in the quarter-finals of the Virginia Slims Championships in New York last year.

Pierce, who has soared up the rankings since coming under the wing of coaches Nick Bolleewitter and Sven Groeneveld, plays her first match on Wednesday against either Italian Sandra Cecchini or Renae Stubbs of Australia.

In the other half of the draw Graf also has her first match on Wednesday against either Elena Makarova of Russia or Larisa Neiland of Latvia.

### Women's rankings

1. Arantza Sanchez Vicario (Spain)	387.91 pts.
2. Steffi Graf (Germany)	289.19
3. Mary Pierce (France)	207.80
4. Conchita Martinez (Spain)	188.07
5. Jana Novotna (Czech Rep.)	171.04
6. Lindsay Davenport (USA)	150.40
7. Gabriela Sabatini (Argentina)	130.35
8. Kimiko Date (Japan)	116.79
9. Natalia Zvereva (Belarus)	107.84
10. Anke Huber (Germany)	103.31
11. Magdalena Maleeva (Bulgaria)	100.67
12. Iva Majoli (Croatia)	90.97
13. Brenda Schultz (Netherlands)	77.51
14. Naoko Sawamatsu (Japan)	76.09
15. Amy Frazier (USA)	76.05
16. Helena Sukova (Czech Rep.)	74.16
17. Sabine Hack (Germany)	73.19
18. Julie Halard (France)	71.77
19. Mary Joe Fernandez (USA)	70.66
20. Amanda Coetzer (S Africa)	70.27

### Agassi edges closer

Andre Agassi's win in San Jose has edged him nearer fellow American Pete Sampras, whom he beat in the Australian Open final, in the world rankings.

1. Pete Sampras (USA)	4725 pts.
2. Andre Agassi (USA)	4082
3. Boris Becker (Germany)	3054
4. Goran Ivanisevic (Croatia)	2885
5. Michael Chang (USA)	2803
6. Sergi Bruguera (Spain)	2779
7. Alberto Berasategui (Spain)	2470
8. Michael Stich (Germany)	2395
9. Stefan Edberg (Sweden)	2277
10. Evgeni Kafelnikov (Russia)	2139
11. Wayne Ferreira (South Africa)	2070
12. Jim Courier (USA)	1928
13. Andrei Medvedev (Ukraine)	1815
14. Magnus Larsson (Sweden)	1587
15. Richard Krajicek (Netherlands)	1569
16. Todd Martin (USA)	1564
17. Marc Rosset (Switzerland)	1534
18. Thomas Muster (Austria)	1517
19. Andrea Gaudenzi (Italy)	1439
20. Jacco Eltingh (Netherlands)	1332

## Neal's departure clears way for 'Big Ron'

COVENTRY (AFP) — Phil Neal left Premiership strugglers Coventry "by mutual agreement" here Tuesday clearing the way for Ron Atkinson to return to management following his dismissal by Aston Villa in November.

Coventry are expected to name a successor to Neal shortly and former Aston Villa and Manchester United boss Atkinson is hot favourite to land the job.

In its statement announcing Neal's departure, the club paid tribute to his services, saying:

"At a time when the game is being maligned with press allegations of sleaze and bungs, Phil Neal has always shown himself to be a man of the highest possible integrity and a tremendous credit to his profession."

Coventry are currently fifth from bottom of the Premiership but even a 2-0 win at Crystal Palace on Saturday was not enough to save Neal's job.

Managerial casualties in English football so far in the 1994/95 season.

Billy Bonds	West Ham	Resigned
Steve Wicks	Scarsborough	Sacked
John Pullis	Bournemouth	Sacked
Joe Jordan	Stoke	Mutual
John McPhail	Hartlepool	Sacked
Phil Henson	Rotherham	Made Gen Man
Mick Walker	Notts County	Sacked
Greg Downs	Hereford	Mutual
Kenny Hibbitt	Walsall	Sacked
Kenny Swain	Wigan	Sacked
Keith Burkinshaw	West Brom	Sacked
Alan Buckley	Grimsby	Resigned
Ossie Ardiles	Tottenham	Sacked
Mike Walker	Everton	Sacked
Ron Atkinson	Aston Villa	Sacked
Joe Royle	Oldham	Resigned
Russell Osman	Bristol City	Sacked
Gerry Francis	QPR	Resigned
John Gorman	Swindon	Sacked
Brian Little	Leicester	Resigned
Dave Sutton	Rochdale	Resigned
Eddie May	Cardiff	Sacked
John Beck	Preston	Sacked
John Lyall	Ipswich	Resigned
Billy Ayre	Scarsborough	Resigned
John Barnwell	Northampton	Sacked
George Burley	Colchester	Resigned
Mike Pejic	Chester	Sacked
Peter Shilton	Plymouth	Resigned
Russell Slade	Notts County	Mutual
Jim Smith	Portsmouth	Mutual
Phil Neal	Coventry	Mutual

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## America's Cup

### New boat for OneAustralia

SAN DIEGO (AFP) — OneAustralia will switch boats for the third round America's Cup trials while Team New Zealand and Nippon decided to stay with the hulls they used in the first two rounds.

Weather permitting, the third round of challenger and defender trials will begin Tuesday in the Pacific Ocean off Point Loma.

Forecasters for Tuesday call for winds in excess of 25 knots.

John Bertrand's oneAustralia will use the new AUS-35 hull, which earlier survived a protest challenge that its construction violated the 1995 event's limit of two new boats per team.

The boat arrived in San Diego last month and has been sailed almost daily since the end of the second round-robin.

Over the past several days, oneAustralia finally got the medium to strong breezes it wanted to see before committing to the boat.

Many observers believed Team New Zealand, which is undefeated on the water, might substitute hulls this

round. The boat that hasn't raced yet has been undergoing considerable work during the past week.

But syndicate head Peter Blake said his group will stick with the hull that leads the challenger standings.

Nippon also begged off changing boats at this time — probably because the new JPN-41 hull has had but three days of practice sailing since it arrived in San Diego.

After two round-robins, the JPN-30 hull is fourth in the challenger standings, but less than a win ahead of France 3 in what could be the battle for the final semifinal berth. The French introduced their new hull in the second round-robin.

While wins in the first round-robin were worth one point and wins in the second series were worth two, the pay-off doubles to four points per win in this round.

"Now it counts ... this is when it gets good," said Chris Dickson, whose NZL-39 is tied for second with oneAustralia at 13 points after two rounds. Team New Zealand has 16. Nippon has 10 and France 7.

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## Islamic storm brews over Atlanta Games

PARIS (AFP) — Women's rights campaigners are set to trigger an Islamic storm over the Atlanta Olympic Games next year.

A Paris-based group is brandishing a twin boycott threat in order to force the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to ban men-only teams from the Games.

Atlanta Plus says that IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch is failing to uphold the Olympic Charter which outlaws discrimination on grounds of creed, colour, politics or sex.

"What makes us angry is that the IOC is a moral force not a political one," said Linda Weil-Curiel, a Paris barrister and one of three founder members of Atlanta Plus.

She condemned the "cowardice" of IOC members who are supposed to uphold the Olympic ideal of sport free from discrimination.

"The ideal is splendid but the IOC itself does not follow it," she said. "The Olympic ideal is being attacked from within."

She said Atlanta Plus is prepared to launch a boycott of the Games and a product boycott of top Olympic sponsors.

The IOC admits that 35 nations, 12 of them Islamic, brought men-only teams to Barcelona in 1992. But it says Atlanta Plus is a political pressure group targeting a religion and has rejected requests for talks with the group.

"That has damaged our image," said Weil-Curiel, "and it will take some time for the suspicion to die down."

But the United Nations will give Weil-Curiel a hearing. On Wednesday she travels to Geneva for a meeting with Ayala Llasso, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. She wants the UN Human Rights Commission to call the IOC to order under UN anti-discrimination resolutions.

Founded in Paris on January 10, Atlanta Plus is snowballing, gathering 300 new members a day and winning backing from two French cabinet members.

U.S. President Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich, the Republican speaker of the house and representative from Atlanta, as well as Britain's Princess Anne, an IOC member, have been approached for support.

On May 8, Weil-Curiel will address UNESCO, the United Nations educational, scientific and cultural organisation.

Weil-Curiel says Atlanta Plus will appoint delegates in all countries which sends teams to the Olympic Games.

"We have zero funds and growing debts," she said. "But we have the conviction that what we are doing is just."

She rejects the charge that Islamic countries including Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are targeted on religious grounds.

"In Barcelona the Olympic Charter was flouted," she said. "We are against discrimination, not religion. Sanctions exist for countries which do not respect the Charter. They must be applied, as they were for the apartheid regime in South Africa."

Blue chip Olympic sponsors such as Coca-Cola will suffer unless they "put morality before the dollar," said Weil-Curiel.

Islamic countries maintain that female sports dress offends Muslim morals and women athletes have often suffered in consequence.

Algeria's Olympic 1,500 metres champion Hassiba Boulmerka was denounced from the pulpit at home.

"What I have been through in the last three years no other athlete could put up with," she said recently.

An Islamic women's games was held in Iran in 1993 with 700 women from 13 countries competing in traditional Muslim dress with men and television cameras banned.

The Iranians have dismissed Atlanta Plus as a "cheap shot at Islam" with a diplomat referring to the boycott threat as an "unjustified attack on the Islamic States."

Weil-Curiel is aware that her group may be in danger of retaliation from Islamic fundamentalists.

"But you can't be afraid," she said. "If you are afraid you do nothing."

Some third world countries with little money for sport cut their Olympic budgets by sacrificing women competitors.

"In such cases we need a major distribution of the colossal profits generated by the Olympics to benefit these countries so women need not suffer," she said.

The IOC has so far responded with caution, asking for a report on women in sport to be presented at its April executive board meeting in Monaco and for a debate on the issue at its next session in Budapest in June.

## Dodgers sign Japanese pitcher

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Hideo Nomo, a star pitcher in Japan, signed a minor league contract Monday with the Los Angeles club this year if baseball's labour fight is solved.

"He has the type of ability we believe is at a major league level," Dodgers' vice president Fred Claire said.

The deal, finalised at a hotel in this city's "Little Tokyo" district, included a reported million-dollar signing bonus. Five other U.S. clubs were interested in Nomo as well.

U.S. labour laws prohibit importing workers from other nations to act as strikebreakers in a labour dispute. Thus, Nomo cannot pitch in the major leagues until the six-month-old play-



Japanese pitcher Hideo Nomo (right) shakes hands with Los Angeles Dodgers President Peter O'Malley (left) following a news conference Monday where it was announced that the Japanese baseball superstar has signed a minor league contract with the Dodgers (AFP photo)

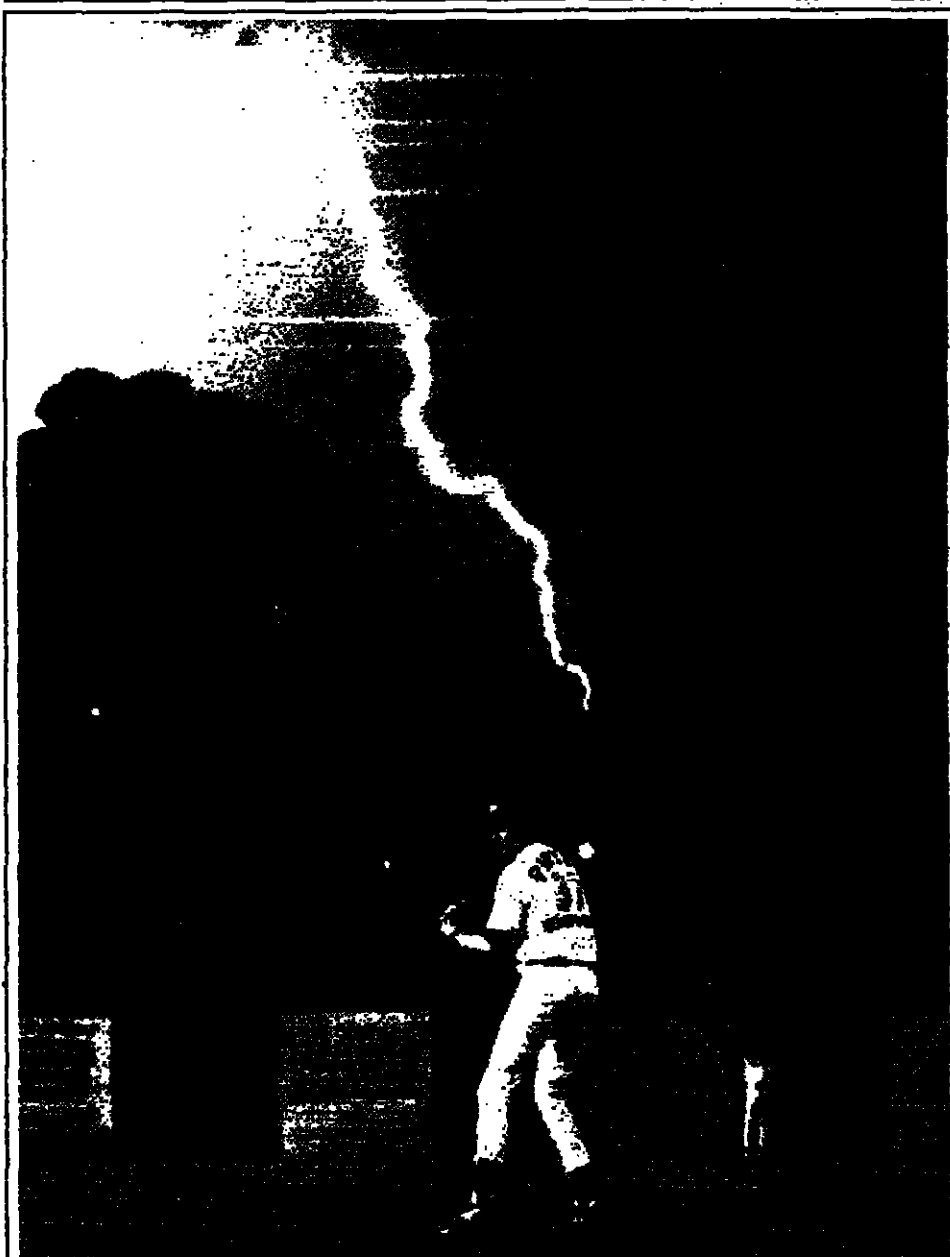
ers strike is settled.

Nomo, 26, led Japan's Pacific League in victories and strikeouts during four of the past five seasons. But he retired from Japanese baseball in order to pursue a Major League berth.

"It has been a dream of mine since I was a child to pitch in the Major Leagues," Nomo said.

Nomo was 78-46 with 1,204 strikeouts and a 3.15 earned-run average in five seasons with the Kintetsu Buffaloes.

The Dodgers have another Asian pitching sensation in their development system. South Korea's Chan Ho Park was a reliever at the start of last season for the Dodgers but spent most of last year in the minor leagues.



Sydney Blues pitcher Adam Meinershausen a fierce electrical storm which hit Sydney last night warms up for the baseball quarterfinals during Friday (AFP photo)



## SPORTS IN BRIEF

## Tyson 'out next month'

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Former world heavyweight champion Mike Tyson, serving a six-year prison sentence for rape, could be released next month. American newspaper Indianapolis Star claims he could be let out on March 25, even though his release was due to be delayed until May 9 after he threatened a guard at the Indiana Youth Centre at Plainfield. The newspaper said Indiana Department of Corrections commissioner Christian DeBruyn has quashed the delay after negotiations with staff. He accepted that Tyson had been an exemplary inmate since the incident, which had occurred early in his sentence following his 1992 conviction. He could then be released under house arrest after being electronically tagged to reveal his whereabouts to the authorities. Tyson, the youngest world heavyweight champion in history at the age of 20, was convicted of raping Desiree Washington, a 19-year-old Miss Black America beauty pageant contestant, in February 1992. He received a 10-year prison term, with four years suspended.

## Atlantic swim claim sunk

MARSEILLE (AFP) — The French Federation of Underwater Sport and Studies has refused to recognise that Guy Delage swam across the Atlantic. The Federation said ocean currents and wind played a bigger part in the way the Frenchman crossed the Atlantic. Delage swam six to 10 hours a day behind a float and spent the night on a raft. It took him 55 days to reach the Barbados after setting out from the Cape Verde Islands. The Federation said even a highly-trained swimmer could manage only 250km before being physically exhausted. However, Delage himself said he did not regard what he had done as a reporting achievement.

## Player escapes death after slashed

ROCKLAND, Massachusetts (AP) — A high school hockey player who narrowly escaped death after his throat was slashed by an opponent's skate was recovering Monday at a hospital near Boston. Joe Carista, 16, a junior right wing for Whitman-Hanson High School, was in stable condition at South Shore Hospital in Weymouth. On Saturday, 155, stitches were required to close an 18-inch (46-cm) wound in his throat. "If (the skate) had come any closer to his jugular, we would have lost him," said hockey coach Bob Corliss. "I could see the inside of his whole throat. Carista fell to the ice when he went to check a Dennis-Yarmouth player early in their game at Rockland Arena. While he was down, an opposing player inadvertently skated over Carista's throat. He got up and skated over to the coach.

## Famed coach Holman dies

NEW YORK (AP) — Nat Holman, the basketball coach at City College of New York for 41 years who led his team to an unprecedented double championship in 1950, has died. He was 98. Holman died Sunday at the Hebrew home for the aged in the Bronx of natural causes, said his nephew, Tom Holman. Holman was part of the original Celtics in the 1920s, a member of the Basketball Hall of Fame and a coach shadowed by a betting scandal that shook college basketball. Called "Mr. Basketball," Holman was widely credited with bringing class and sophistication to the game, and helped spawn the eastern style of basketball known as "the city game."

## IAAF lift Gordon ban

LONDON (AFP) — Cancer sufferer Peter Gordon has finally won his fight against bureaucracy and will have a four-year athletics ban erased. The International Amateur Athletic Federation's (IAAF) doping commission agreed unanimously on Tuesday to recommend reinstatement of the 43-year-old discus thrower. It will be ratified by the IAAF council in May, ending a two-year nightmare for Gordon, who has always protested that he had never taken performance-enhancing drugs. The three-times British national champion was banned after he was unable to give a full urine sample when tested at a meeting at Crystal Palace in 1993. Three months ago, the suspension was lifted by the British Athletic Federation (BAF) because of his "grave medical condition."

## Goldworthy battling AIDS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota (AP) — For years, Bill Goldworthy, one of the original Minnesota North Stars, battled alcohol. That problem may have contributed to another, deadly fight — the one against AIDS. In a copywright story Sunday, the Saint Paul Pioneer Press said Goldworthy acknowledged having unsafe sex during his worst drinking binges. "As athletes, we tend to think of ourselves as invincible," Goldworthy, 50, told the Pioneer Press. "This is different. This isn't a broken arm." Goldworthy played with the stars from their first season in 1967 until 1977 during a 14-year NHL playing career that began with the Boston Bruins in 1964 and ended with the New York Rangers in 1978. The Pioneer Press said Goldworthy was told he has AIDS in November while in a hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, where blood clots that moved from his leg to his lungs set him on a month-long fight with pneumonia.

## Medvedev chairman of charities

MILAN (AP) — Andrei Medvedev, one of the top young professional players, was elected 1995 chairman of ATP Tour charities, the organisation which has raised over \$10 million since its inception in 1991. Medvedev, a 20-year-old Ukrainian who has won nine titles so far in his career, succeeds American Michael Chang, the 1994 chairman. Medvedev's appointment was announced Monday at the Muratti Time indoor tournament, the Milan stage of the ATP Tour. ATP charities, supported by professional tennis players, benefits charities around the world.

## Visa problems for Smirnov

OSLO (AP) — Olympic 50km champion Vladimir Smirnov of Kazakhstan has not yet been able to get his visa to Canada for the Nordic Ski World Championships at Thunder Bay on March 9-19. Smirnov, second in the World Cup standings behind Norway's Bjorn Daelie, must pick up the visa in London. But getting there is no easy feat. "The problem is that I don't have a visitor's visa to England," he said, adding that he is used to visa trouble when he travels to competitions. "It usually gets resolved, it just takes longer for me," he added.

## No breakaway favourites in NBA transition year

WASHINGTON (AP) — Veteran teams with unfulfilled title dreams are battling a new generation of stars for U.S. basketball supremacy, with neither side able to pull away entering a stretch run to playoff glory.

Expect experienced Phoenix and youthful Orlando to lead a horde of title contenders when the National Basketball Association (NBA) regular season resumes Tuesday after the All-Star Game break.

"It's unbelievable. It's the toughest league I've seen in a while," San Antonio center David Robinson said. "There are no easy games."

The Spurs join Phoenix, Utah, Seattle, New York and reigning champion Houston among traditional powers. But they will be tested by younger rivals from Orlando, Charlotte and Indiana plus a rebuilt Los Angeles Lakers team.

"There are just a lot of great teams," Denver center Dikembe Mutombo said.

San Antonio won eight of 10 games before the break, with controversial star Dennis Rodman averaging 20 rebounds a game during that stretch.

"We have the talent to win the title, but we don't always seem to bring it to the table," Robinson said. "I like what our team can do but we need to be more consistent."

Reigning champion Houston, led by Nigerian-born center Hakeem Olajuwon, has the same problem. The Rockets ripped NBA overall leader Phoenix last week but lost to the Los Angeles Clip-

ping was lost for the season with a knee injury in practice. Dream Team II guard Kevin Johnson also remains out with injuries.

But Barkley remains confident.

"We have a good chance," Barkley said. "If everybody plays well, we will be fine. Our goal is to win the championship and we continue to think we can."

New York, which lost to Houston in last year's final, has the same attitude as Patrick Ewing bids for his first title. The Knicks are 18-4 since Christmas after a 12-12 start and Charles Oakley will return soon from toe surgery.

"There's a notion that we had our run and should move aside and let the real teams make theirs," Knicks coach Pat Riley said. "Well, every team will be tested when adversity hits. Teams that get it right win championships."

NBA scoring leader Shaquille O'Neal and Orlando are doing almost everything right. With Anfernee Hardaway directing the offense and newcomers Horace Grant and Brian Shaw making key contributions, the Magic have become the team pers, whose 8-40 record is the NBA's worst.

"We have the team that can win again, but we can't take things for granted," Olajuwon said. "San Antonio, Utah and Phoenix all make it tough. And you have other dangerous teams like Seattle and the Lakers."

Phoenix and 10-year veteran Charles Barkley seek their first NBA crown. But hopes dimmed when Danny Man-

to beat in the East.

"Shaq has more confidence and a better all around game and Hardaway is just unbelievable," Robinson said. "He's already one of the league's best players."

The Magic are an NBA-best 23-1 at home. O'Neal averages 29.7 points with Hardaway adding 20.7 to make the most productive NBA duo. But they must get past the Knicks to win it all.

"If we want to be the best in the East, we have to go through New York," he said. "They are a great team. We've shown we can beat them, though. When we play the Knicks, we have to do everything right."

Charlotte missed last year's playoffs but the Hornets are division leaders. With Larry Johnson and Alonzo Mourning healthy, they will be a threat.

"If we stay healthy, we win the division without a doubt," Mourning said.

With the good comes the bad. Glenn "Big Dog" Robinson has been playing like his nickname, leading the NBA with 3.9 turnovers a game. Philadelphia center Shawn Bradley has fouled out of 15 games. Only Miami and New York have had more disqualifications.

Miami, Washington and Golden State have made major trades to become contenders but all three are struggling among the league's worst clubs.

Rule changes to boost scoring have not helped. A shorter three-point line and relaxed guarding rules have not lifted last season's average of 101 points per team per game and centers remain the top NBA scorers.

Chicago's Scottie Pippen, who buried a chair in disgust last month after a foul call, wants a trade by the February 23 deadline but doubts the Bulls will make a deal so soon.

"Too much has happened for me to be happy in Chicago now," Pippen said.



Phoenix Suns star Charles Barkley #34 (File photo)

A trade for Pippen could swing the delicate balance of power for a number of teams, including Barkley's Suns.

"Anybody in their right mind would want to play with Pippen," Barkley said. "Other than Hakeem Olajuwon, he is the best player in the world."

Warriors replace Nelson with Lanier

In Oakland, California, Don Nelson, who guided Dream Team II to a world championship six months ago, stepped down as coach of the National Basketball Association's Golden State Warriors.

Nelson, who received a reported one million-dollar payment for quitting, will be replaced by assistant coach Bob Lanier, a Hall of Fame center.

The Warriors were expected to be title contenders but struggled after trading guard Billy Owens and forward Chris Webber, both of whom disliked Nelson's disciplinary manner.

The Warriors won seven of their first eight games before trading Webber, last year's

NBA rookie of the year. Now they are 14-31 in the midst of Nelson's seventh season as coach.

Nelson, who began coaching with Milwaukee in 1976, has an 817-604 career record with a 51-61 playoff mark. He has taken Golden State to the playoffs four times but never reached the playoff semi-finals.

Nelson missed seven games in December with pneumonia and was out for two games this month with the flu.

Lanier spent 10 seasons with Detroit and four in Milwaukee playing under Nelson before retiring in 1984. This season's assistant position is his only coaching experience.

Lakers put Ceballos on injured list

The Los Angeles Lakers placed Cedric Ceballos on the injured list on Monday after the All-Star forward underwent surgery to repair a torn ligament in his right thumb Thursday.

The 2.01 metres Ceballos is expected to miss six to eight weeks. The Lakers signed veteran forward Kurt Rambis to a second 10-day contract to take Ceballos' place on the roster.

Ceballos suffered the injury in an 88-74 loss to Denver on February 3 when Nuggets' centre Dikembe Mutombo slapped his hand while trying to steal the ball with 7:14 remaining.

Ironically, Mutombo was named to replace Ceballos on the Western Conference All-Star team.

Ceballos is the Lakers' leading scorer, averaging 22.0 points per game. He also is averaging 8.6 rebounds.

Ceballos, who won the slam dunk championship in 1992, was named NBA player of the month for December. He scored a career-high 50 points on December 20 against Minnesota, becoming the first Laker to accomplish the feat since Gail Goodrich in 1975.

## BOC round-the-world race

## France's Auguin fastest

NEW YORK (AP) — Christophe Auguin turned in a 500-kilometre performance Monday — the fastest yet on this leg — as solo sailors competing in the BOC round-the-world race surfed down big waves and watched nervously for icebergs.

Powered by strong westerly winds, the fleet churned through the southern Pacific Ocean, trying to avoid the Antarctic's most northerly ice floes. The yachts were almost halfway between New Zealand and South America's Cape Horn, heading to the next finish line in Punta Del Este, Uruguay.

Auguin, the defending champion from France, averaged 15.8 knots Monday. Jean Luc Van Den Heede also had a spectacular day, covering 483 kilometres, to remain in second place 362 kilometres behind his countryman.

U.S. sailor Steve Pettengill was in third place, 574 kilometres behind Auguin, while fourth-place Jean Jacques Provoyeur of South Africa reported problems with his radar.

All are competing in Class

I, which allows boats of up to 18 metres.

Italy's Giovanni Soldini continued to dominate Class II, for boats up to 15 metres, leading David Adams of Australia by 142 kilometres.

Van Den Heede sailed within sight of an iceberg Monday, his second of the race. On Saturday he reported an iceberg 6.5-kilometre wide, prompting organisers to issue an all-points bulletin to racers.

"It's a lot further north than they were in the last BOC," Adams observed after that warning. "Sleep's not going to be in the cards, we'll just be sitting in front of the radar."

The ice that presents the most danger to sailors, however, are the smaller chunks — the "growlers" — that calve off the main iceberg.

"Spotted another iceberg with plenty, plenty of growlers," Van Den Heede messaged headquarters Monday. "Avoid this area by night after (dark). The white top of each wave seems to be a growler."

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♠A983 ♣1065 ♥98753 ♦Void  
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What action do you take?  
A—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠A983 ♣1065 ♥98753 ♦Void  
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What action do you take?  
Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠A983 ♣1065 ♥98753 ♦Void  
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What action do you take?  
Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠A983 ♣1065 ♥98753 ♦Void  
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What action do you take?  
Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠A983 ♣1065 ♥98753 ♦Void  
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What action do you take?

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Potential U.S. Consulting engineering firms may obtain the Request for Proposals (RFP) documents for the subject Project from the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, Government Tenders Directorate, P.O.Box 1220, Amman, Jordan. Fax: 962-6-606751.

The date for submission the technical and financial proposals will be not later than 13:00 hours Jordan's time on April 4, 1995.

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Yusra, Mahmoud Hamedieh in <b>The Immigrant</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		Mahmoud Hamida — Madiha Kamel — Hassan Al Asmar in <b>Satan's Gate</b> (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 2:30, 8:30, 10:30		<b>CONCORD '1' SPECIALIST</b> Shows: 12:30, 8:15 <b>SPEED</b> Shows: 2:45, 10:30 <b>CONCORD '2' ROBOCOP '3'</b>		SUM'A in the satirical play <b>HI CITIZEN</b> Composed and directed by Mohammad Al Shawaqfeh Daily from 8:30 p.m. Children's Play <b>The Ninja Turtles Show</b> Directed by Akram Abul Ragheb Daily at 10:30 p.m.	Presents <b>Abu Awwad</b> in the social comedy <b>Punctured Bag</b> The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day	Presents: <b>AL SALAM YA SALAM</b> at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed on Saturdays & Sundays



## Russian artillery fire rings out around Grozny, breaks truce

ALKHAN-YURT, Russia (Agencies) — Artillery fire rang out Tuesday at strategic sites around the Chechen capital Grozny in violation of a heavy-weapons ceasefire signed by Chechen and Russian commanders less than 24 hours earlier.

Heavy arms exchanges battered crossroads near Alkhan-Yurt around four kilometres south of the Chechen capital. The site is the last Chechen rebel-held point of entry by road into the city.

Russian guns also resumed their shelling of Yermolovskiy, a village some eight kilometres west of Grozny, after a 500-metre and completely cut off from the outside world for the past few days.

As the big guns boomed again over the battered city, Russian officials sounded pessimistic about prospects for a lasting truce and Russia's counter-intelligence chief said the hunt was still on for separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev.

Interfax news agency, reporting from Grozny, said Chechen fighters made rocket strikes in the late morning against Russian tanks near Goly, 20 kilometres southwest of Grozny.

It said later that Russian artillery had opened up on separatist positions in southern Grozny.

The exchanges appeared to violate clearly Monday's ceasefire accord covering the use of heavy weapons — aviation, artillery, rockets and missiles — which have been

responsible for most of the destruction and huge loss of life in two months of fighting.

Follow-up talks on extending the ceasefire agreement had been scheduled for Wednesday.

In Moscow, an official at air force headquarters was quoted by Interfax as saying air attacks had been halted against Chechen positions before Monday's ceasefire talks.

This official said they would remain suspended altogether if the ceasefire was converted into a permanent end to hostilities.

But Sergei Stepashin, who heads the counter-intelligence service (FSK), was pessimistic. "The accord... is unlikely to lead to a full-scale ceasefire in this North Caucasus republic," he was quoted as saying by Interfax.

Mr. Stepashin, contacted by Interfax in the Ingush settlement of Sleptovskoye on the border with Chechnya, said he expected Mr. Dudayev's rebels to use the ceasefire to regroup.

General Lev Rokhlin, who played a key part in the capture of Grozny, was quoted by ITAR-TASS news agency as saying he expected Chechen militants to violate the truce.

"There is no doubt that a certain group of Chechen militants will not observe any agreements," Gen. Rokhlin said.

The interior ministry's public relations department said in a statement that re-

connaissance planes and artillery had been used around towns east of Grozny in the past 24 hours.

"Artillery gave support to fighting forces and suppressed firing positions of the illegal armed groups in the regions of Novopromyslovskiy, Alkhan-Kala and Argun," it said.

The ministry said six Russian regular army servicemen had been killed and 25 wounded in the past 24 hours.

Chechen military commander Aslan Maskhadov accused Moscow's forces of breaking the ceasefire which he agreed with the commander of Russian Interior Ministry forces in Chechnya, Colonel Anatoly Kulikov.

Speaking from his headquarters in Shali, 30 kilometres east of Grozny, Mr. Maskhadov told AFP: "The heavy weapons fire is continuing, which means that the Russian commander has not kept his promise" to call a halt to the shelling.

However, Mr. Maskhadov, who decamped to Shali last week after Russian forces captured virtually all of Grozny, added that he considered Monday's opening day of negotiations to have been "a success".

He and Col. Kulikov Monday announced an immediate heavy-weapons truce and exchange of prisoners in the nine-week war after meeting in the Ingush town of Ordzhonikidzevskaya, just over the Chechen-Ingush border.



BANGLA FESTIVAL: Young girls from Dhaka's Arts College dance wearing traditional colour of Falgun, first Bengali month of yellow saris to celebrate the arrival of Baisakhi or spring in Bangladesh. Young girls including students usually wear yellow, the colour of Falgun, first Bengali month of yellow saris to celebrate the arrival of Baisakhi or spring in Bangladesh. (AFP photo)

## Srou and Faisal agree to shelve their differences

By Sa'eda Kilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The speaker of the Lower House of Parliament and the only female deputy appear to have reached a temporary truce, but both also vowed to fight back if necessary.

Speaker Saad Hayel Srou and Deputy Toujan Faisal have been engaged in a battle of words since Sunday with each accusing the other of infringing upon the House's laws and regulations.

In a press conference on Monday, Mr. Srou threatened to take strict measures against the deputy and said her continuous "insults" of the house had become intolerable.

The clash was sparked when Ms. Faisal filed several objections during Sunday's session. First she called for the setting up of a special committee to examine the financial status of the Arabic language daily Sawt Al Shaab. She then filed a request to include her name in a parliamentary committee to visit prisoners at Swaga prison, but she said Mr. Srou ignored her request.

According to Ms. Faisal, the speaker got furious when

she questioned the legality of his meeting with a Jewish delegation on Sunday without having the approval of the House.

Mr. Srou accused the deputy of exceeding limits and asked her to shut up. He later announced that deputies were calling for strict measures to be adopted against the deputy. He said it was time to put an end to her "provocative" practices in Parliament and the statements she was making to the press that did not fall in line with the country's traditions and customs.

"This is not the first time, it is an accumulation of several incidents," Mr. Srou told the Jordan Times. "One can voice his/her opinion but without hurting or insulting the others."

Ms. Faisal, an Amman deputy, had stirred controversy during the vote of confidence session on Jan. 29 when she devoted all her speech to questioning the personal train of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker rather than talk about his government's programme.

Ms. Faisal asserted that on Sunday she was only exercising her right to speak in Parliament but the speaker

refused and ignored her requests. She said she was trying to make a point of order but failed.

"I'm not aggressive. But I touch on sensitive issues," she said. "All I want is to see democracy prosper."

Ms. Faisal cancelled a press conference she had called Tuesday in which she was planning to respond to the statements made by Mr. Srou on Monday. Newspapers quoted the speaker as saying that options open to the House included impeaching the deputy or taking her to court when the House's ordinary session is over.

Ms. Faisal said the issue was settled. She said she had received assurances from sources she declined to disclose that parliamentarians would not take any action against her and they would not hamper her performance. "I don't hold any grudge," she told the Jordan Times, "and I'm not looking for a fight. I'll give it a try."

"But if I feel any foul play, I'll hit back," she added. Mr. Srou said he also wanted to smooth over differences but wanted of a "different response" if such "provocations" were repeated.

## Lebanon launches hunt for toxic waste

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon launched a hunt on Tuesday for 10,000 barrels of toxic waste dumped in the country by Italy during the 1975-90 civil war.

Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri ordered the search on Monday, saying the waste must be taken out of the country.

The international environmental agency Greenpeace last month called the barrels "ecological time bombs" and said they should be shipped back to Italy.

The case has caused an outcry in Lebanon, raising questions about why the government has done nothing to clean up the waste since the end of the civil war.

Mr. Hariri appointed a working group headed by a serving army brigadier and gave it 10 days to find the barrels.

"There are toxic wastes that need to be shipped out of the country," Mr. Hariri said in a speech. "We will continue the investigations but there is no need to live in fear that the country is infected."

A source in the working group told Reuters it hoped to have all the information needed to find the barrels before the deadline.

A judge is simultaneously interrogating people suspected of importing the waste in a bid to help locate the barrels and prosecute those responsible.

Greenpeace said the waste was part of 16,000 barrels containing more than 24,000 tonnes shipped from Italy to Beirut in 1987-88. Some 6,000 barrels were later sent back to Italy.

The port of Beirut was controlled at the time by the Lebanese Forces, the biggest Christian civil war militia. Greenpeace said the barrels were dumped along the coast of Christian east Beirut and in the Keserwan mountains north-east of the capital.

According to the head of the Lebanese parliament's environment committee, a secret Lebanese army report in 1988 said that 1,500 barrels were buried in the mountains and the rest were dumped in the sea or destroyed.

## Report says Kim descended from heaven

Report says Kim descended from heaven

SEOUL (R) — North Koreans believe unannounced leader Kim Jong-il descended from heaven, Pyongyang's official media reported Tuesday as it heaped further praise on him ahead of his 55th birthday this week.

The official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said that a "seven-colour luminous ring" had appeared around the sun above Jong-il Peak on Mount Paektu, which North Korea propaganda calls Kim's birthplace. The ring shed "dazzling light" from 10 a.m. to about 5 p.m. Sunday, KCNA said. "And, from around 08:00 next day, a ring around the moon, rare to be seen, bright and deep silver colour, illuminated the universe above the Jong-il Peak," the agency, monitored in Tokyo said.

According to the report, workers at both a secret meteorological observatory on the mountain and at another weather station, as well as local residents, said it was the first time they had witnessed such phenomena in February. "The heaven seems to be celebrating the birthday of the great leader Comrade Kim Jong-il, representing the unanimous wish and desire of the people all over the world," it quoted them as saying.

The dear leader Comrade Kim Jong-il is evidently the greatest among the great men, who has descended from heaven," they were quoted as saying.

## Ramos signs into law sexual harassment act

MANILA (AFP) — President Fidel Ramos Tuesday signed an act outlawing sexual harassment in the Philippines and prescribing penalties including prison terms of up to six months, the presidential palace said. He said at the signing ceremony that the new law capped "our efforts towards social reform," as "women comprise the great majority of those who have suffered — and suffered silently — from work-related sexual harassment."

Mr. Ramos said the law would reduce "their fear of being fired, penalized or ridiculed," and employees "no longer need to suffer the unwanted advances of their superiors and co-workers nor the stigma of being ostracized for having been victims of such crimes." The statute carries one to six-month prison terms plus fines for employers or those in authority in the work place, schools and the "training environment" who demand or require sexual favours.

## 'Disturbance' forces plane to land in Scotland

GLASGOW, Scotland (AFP) — An airline passenger was arrested after a mid-air "disturbance" forced a Canadian-bound Jumbo Jet to divert to Glasgow, police said. Police said the KLM Boeing 747 from Amsterdam to Toronto diverted after a "disturbance" on board, but gave no further details. Passengers are understood to have restrained a man a short time into the flight. An arrest was made soon after it landed, and a 47-year-old Canadian is expected to appear in court Tuesday. Local sources said the plane was believed to have been obliged to dump thousands of gallons of fuel to make its unscheduled landing. The passenger spent three hours at Glasgow Airport's newly-opened international pier before resuming their journey on the Jumbo. It was understood the incident had no terrorist implications.

## Indian state bans lottery

CHANDIGARH, India (AP) — The north Indian state of Haryana Monday banned state-run lotteries, alarmed that many families were being bankrupted by compulsive gamblers. The ban came after New Delhi banned lotteries in the capital last year, but many people simply drove to Haryana to buy tickets for the daily lotteries. Haryana Chief Minister Bhajan Lal told a news conference that his government will lose 800 million rupees (\$27 million) a year because of the ban.

## U.N. staff evacuate Somalia

MOGADISHU (R) — Dozens of civilians working for the United Nations in Somalia were evacuated on Tuesday as military forces prepared the ground for the departure of troops and their hardware later this month.

Some 50 expatriate civilians flew out of the U.N.-controlled airport bound for the Kenyan capital Nairobi.

"I made a lot of Somali friends here," said Walt Johnson, who worked for the U.S. contractor Brown and Root which serviced the mammoth U.N. operation in Somalia (UNOSOM).

"They don't want us to leave. I feel things are going to get worse after we've gone."

Somalis who worked for the U.N. were also on the flight. One Somali, complaining loudly that the world body's mission had been a failure and that the consequences for Somalia would be grim, waved the blue national flag and kissed the ground before boarding the aircraft.

U.N. special envoy Victor Ghebo and a skeleton civilian staff of less than 100 — at its peak there were 730 UNOSOM workers — will be left at Mogadishu's airport and port. They are due to go by the end of the month.

UNOSOM has failed to bring Somalia's belligerent clan warlords together to form an interim government over the last two years.

More than 130 peacekeepers and hundreds of Somalis have been killed in a mission in 1993 turned sour as U.N. troops battled militias on the streets of Mogadishu.

The U.N. defends its record, pointing to the welcome it received from local people in the provinces, where a famine killed many thousands in 1992. Many areas are still relatively peaceful and rural life has returned to normal in many areas.

About 7,000 troops from Pakistan, Egypt and Bangladesh still remain in the U.N. base. Planeloads are leaving every day.

Many feared that Somali militias could try to attack the outgoing U.N. troops and loot their vehicles, tanks and guns.

But the Somalis seem more intent on jostling for good positions in the city close to the airport and port so that when the U.N. goes, they can seize the facilities.

A bloody feud between rival Somali fruit export companies last week in which several Somalis died — and an Italian cameraman was killed — has calmed down and there is little shooting in the chaotic city.

At the airport, U.N. forces

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israeli police question Arafat aide

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli police said they were questioning an Israeli Arab aide to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and that he might be charged for unspecified "offences." The adviser, Ahmad Tibi, said last week that police had served him a summons to appear for questioning over his remarks that Jewish settlement activity could reignite the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories. "He (Tibi) is at present being questioned at Bethlehem police headquarters," a police spokesman said. "He is being questioned under oath on suspicion of having committed offences. When the questioning is finished he will presumably be released on bail. We are not going into the exact charges being brought against him." The spokesman refused to elaborate on what Dr. Tibi was being questioned about. Dr. Tibi said on Friday: "They summoned me because a bus driver saw me on television saying that settlement activity could reignite the intifada. He complained that the remark gave him insomnia."

### Threat targets Wall Street — report

NEW YORK (AFP) — Authorities in New York have received "uncomfortably credible" reports that Muslim fundamentalists were planning attacks on the New York financial district, a published report said Tuesday. "From the language that was used, we think that a stock exchange is the likely target," a law enforcement source told New York Newsday. "We're taking this very seriously." The reported attacks seemed to be aimed at revenge for the trial of 11 Muslims including Sheikh Abdul Omar Rahman, who are accused in a wide-ranging conspiracy to attack targets in New York, the daily said. Newsday said the attacks were planned before March 2, the end of Ramadan. Security has been stepped up in the Wall Street area, which is adjacent to the World Trade Centre, target of a Feb. 26, 1993 bombing in which six people were killed.

### Khaddam, Sharaa to visit Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa are to visit Iran soon to discuss Damascus-Tehran ties, a foreign ministry official said here Tuesday. Mohammad Kazem Khansari, director of the ministry's Middle East department, told the English-language daily Iran News that Syrian President Hafez Al Assad was also expected to visit Iran "in the near future." But he did not announce any dates for the visits. The Syrian embassy in Tehran would not confirm an imminent visit to Iran by Mr. Khaddam and Mr. Sharaa, but one Syrian diplomat told AFP that officials from the two countries met once a year alternately, in Damascus and Tehran.

### Court annuls verdicts in Meloy slaying

BEIRUT (AP) — The appeals court has annulled guilty verdicts and ordered new trials for two Lebanese men in the kidnapping and slaying of the U.S. ambassador in Beirut in 1976. The court Tuesday set March 15 as date for retrial of Bassem Mohammad Farh and Naeem Ahmad Kamal. It had annulled their verdicts last week in a decision published in newspapers Tuesday. Mr. Farh, Kamal and Toufic Mohammad Faroukh had been tried in absentia and sentenced to life imprisonment May 5 in the kidnapping and murder of ambassador Francis E. Meloy, his economic counselor Robert O. Waring and Lebanese driver Mohammad Moghrabi. The three victims were crossing the green line that separated Beirut in June 1976 when they disappeared at a militia checkpoint at the height of sectarian kidnappings during the 1975-90 civil war. Their bullet-riddled bodies were found several days later on a beach in west Beirut.

### Marianne Gingrich gets Israeli medal

TEL AVIV (AP) — The wife of U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich received an honorary medal during a visit to a West Bank settlement and was also given one to take home to her husband, settlement officials said Tuesday. Mrs. Gingrich toured the Maaleh Adumim settlement on Monday as part of her weeklong visit to Israel. Successive U.S. governments have opposed Jewish settlement construction in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, saying settlements posed obstacles to Mideast peace. When asked whether the visit might prove politically embarrassing for her husband, Mrs. Gingrich said: "I wanted to see it. This is the second time I've been across the green line. I have written the mayor and wanted to see the city." The remarks were carried by the Jerusalem Post daily Tuesday.

## Talibans demand passage to Kabul

ISLAMABAD (Agencies) — A student-led army stood poised to sweep into Kabul Tuesday after capturing the headquarters of former Afghan Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar south of the city.

The Taliban, a force of militants, were face to face with Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani's troops just outside Kabul demanding entry to the city.

They were entrenched in Sangi Nawishta town which has become the new frontline for the forces defending Kabul, which is just 20 kilometres away, the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) said, adding Mr. Rabbani's forces were based between the Bini Hissar hills and Sangi Nawishta south of the capital.

"We have no personal enmity with any mujahideen party but we will fight any-

body opposing our general programme of collecting all the arms and creating an Islamic government," said a Taliban commander.

"We want the establishment of a single Islamic administration in the country and welcome anybody helping us in this line," he added.

Mr. Rabbani's troops had advanced from the capital to Sangi Nawishta which is only five kilometres from Charasayab, the headquarters in Afghanistan of Hezb-e-Islami chief Hekmatyar, which the Taliban captured some hours earlier, eyewitnesses said.

The two are now as close as 50 metres in some sections. AIP said negotiations were underway between the two sides over the Taliban demand they be allowed to freely enter the city where they plan to disarm all factions in Kabul.

The capture of Charasayab is a major setback for Mr. Hekmatyar whose headquarters 25 kilometres south of Kabul were considered impregnable.

"After very heavy fighting in Puli Alam on Monday, we marched down to Charasayab today without any fighting," said a Taliban commander, Mulla Borjan.

In the past few days Hezb-e-Islami fighters have already lost the province of Logar, south of the capital, to the advancing Taliban and another stronghold at Maidan Shahr, southwest of Kabul.

United Nations envoy Mahmood Mestiri appealed for a ceasefire in Afghanistan following the rout of Mr. Hekmatyar's forces.

"The (U.N.) special mission's work has entered into an important phase in which

it is working with all sides to proceed by Feb. 18 to a peaceful transfer of power," Mr. Mestiri said in a statement released in Islamabad.

"At this juncture, I would like to appeal to all warring sides to cease hostilities, open all roads and restore electrical power to Kabul," the statement said.

"The new developments in Afghanistan demonstrate the desire of the Afghan people for peace and the disillusionment with the present disastrous situation in the country," it added.

Charles Santos, one of Mr. Mestiri's advisers, said the United Nations would keep trying to arrange a way for President Rabbani to transfer power to an interim council.

He said Mr. Mestiri would fly to Kabul in two days to try to complete agreement on the transfer of power.

## Algeria to resume talks; violence rages unabated

TUNIS (R) — Authorities in Algeria made new moves on Tuesday to try and stem bloodshed but guerrillas pursued their armed campaign against the army-backed government.

On the political front, President Liamine Zeroul resumed talks with political leaders on planned presidential elections. At the same time the government-appointed parliament passed a law to grant pardon for repentant guerrillas.

For their part the guerrillas took their campaign to overthrow the secular government to a new level of armed attacks, targeting mainly the country's intellectuals.

In what the leading Arabic language newspaper dubbed "bloody Monday," gunmen struck in central Algiers, killing the director of the Algerian national theatre, Azeddine Medjoubi, and student leader Abdul Hafid Said.

College director Hocine Leklou was gunned down the same day in Baraki, a guerrilla stronghold south-east of Algiers.

Government daily Al Moudjahid journalist, Hamid Aberkane, escaped death on

Monday morning during an armed ambush outside his home in Algiers, his newspaper said on Tuesday.

No movement has claimed responsibility for the attacks but last month two leading Islamic fundamentalist groups called on their militants to step up armed attacks in the Holy Month of Ramadan, being observed in February.

Algeria has reported several deadly attacks since the call by the Armed Islamic Group, the most radical fundamentalist movement, and its ally, the Islamic Salvation Army, the armed wing of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Fundamentalists seeking to install a radical Islamist state have killed professional workers such as teachers, doctors, magistrates and lawyers, and at least 31 journalists in the past three years. Western intelligence sources say at least 30,000 people have been killed in all.

The government has offered elections as a means of dealing with the national crisis which began three years ago.

## Kuwait: Accused bomber helped Iraq's occupation

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Kuwait said on Tuesday the alleged mastermind of New York's World Trade Centre bombing, Ramzi Ahmad Yousef, was a former resident of the emirate who had helped Iraqi forces during their 1990-91 occupation.

"We know that he collaborated with the Iraqis. He was one of their militants (during the occupation)," Interior Minister Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah said in brief remarks to Reuters.

"He would do whatever he was asked to do," Sheikh Ali said, adding without giving details: "He did all sorts of things (in Kuwait)."

Mr. Yousef is being held by U.S. authorities and is accused of masterminding the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York which killed six people and injured more than 1,000. He has pleaded not guilty.

Wanted in the United States for a reward of \$2 million Mr. Yousef was arrested in Pakistan last week and turned over to U.S. authorities.

Sheikh Ali said Mr. Yousef had left Kuwait for good at some stage during Iraq's

occupation. A U.S.-led coalition force ended the occupation by driving out Iraqi troops in February 1991 after a six-week war.

In Cape Town, a tearful, frightened family awaited word from the South African religious student who reportedly led authorities to Mr. Yousef in Pakistan.

Diplomatic sources said the student, Ismaque Parker, his wife Fehmida and their baby were taken into protective custody in the United States after helping U.S. authorities capture Mr. Yousef.

In Cape town, a family member received a telephone call last week from a friend in Pakistan who said Mr. Parker, his wife and child had disappeared. His relatives had heard nothing from Mr. Parker and had been worried since receiving the call. Many were crying Monday as they spoke from their home in a conservative, Muslim community in Cape Town.

Mr. Parker's widowed mother and 11 siblings refused to be named, saying they feared they would be targeted by sympathisers of Mr. Yousef.